



Saltford CofE Primary School

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Headteacher: Dawn Sage
Co-Chairs of Governors: Megan Jackson and Richard Rowland

20th April 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I sincerely hope you are all keeping safe and well.

Since school closure on Friday 20th March all our lives have changed dramatically. As we face truly unprecedented challenges, health and safety (both physical and mental) are of utmost priority and concern for everyone ranging from our immediate families to our wider community.

I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on the major changes to schooling last month, what we've learned from you about educating at home, and to outline how we would like to develop home assisted learning in the new term.

Although there is much uncertainty, we know that the coming summer term will be unlike any we've ever known.

Easter provision

At school, we have been busy organising provision for vulnerable children and for the children of our keyworkers over Easter. We welcomed St John's and St Keyna school children to our site over Easter in addition to the other four schools we have been supporting at Saltford. My thanks go to all the staff, including Dave, Ollie and Charlotte from Up and Under Sports, who have been truly outstanding, caring, compassionate, committed and creative. Thanks also to Miss Davis, Mrs Knight and Mr Beckett who worked throughout the Easter bank holiday weekend.

Online learning survey

Many thanks to all of you who completed our online learning survey. I really appreciate you taking the time to let me know how things are going and what provision you have in place. From looking through this and other correspondence and discussions I have had with parents, I am acutely aware of the challenges facing you at the moment. Learning at home **is not** the same as learning at school and that can be made even more challenging when parents are also trying to work at home. The many issues to consider include:

- family pressures including health worries and financial challenges
- finding a balance between family life and family homeworking while more people than ever are required to work at home
- limited shared spaces
- children's reluctance to engage with formal learning
- parents' level of expertise and confidence to support
- personal and professional pressures that result from working from home
- Importantly, the household's access to resources and technology (including reliability of connectivity, number of devices and access to a printer).

We completely understand the position you may find yourself in at that moment and that we need to have realistic expectations. I would like to assure you that whatever learning is happening in your household, I know you are all doing your best in these extremely new and challenging circumstances.

Home learning

Home learning is neither the same as school learning (it should not try to replicate it) nor is it the same as home schooling.

On the home learning front, I understand some of you may have felt a great deal of pressure to keep learning going with your children. There is an overwhelming offer of online resources out there and our [home learning section on our website](#) is extremely rich and comprehensive. We have only included recommended links here to help filter the volume of online options.

Some of you tell me that social media can exacerbate this pressure. No-one expects you to replicate school life and school learning at home – it is not realistic and, for the vast majority, simply not possible.

Home Assisted Learning (HAL)

Our teachers are keen to offer HAL that meets everyone's needs – a selection depending on your circumstances.

We are currently working with our primary team of schools within our Academy Trust to set up See Saw, an online platform that will enable communication between your child and their class teacher. We plan to use the paid version of this software and as soon as we have the accounts set up, we will contact you with guidance as to how it all works. (This is similar to Tapestry which we already have in place for our Reception children.)

In the meantime, mindful of varying family circumstances, we are trying to offer materials for all children to continue with some academic learning and other enjoyable activities. Some of these children can hopefully complete individually and some with an adult (or older sibling) support. Some of you tell us you still have work left over from the home learning packs we managed to copy and put together before we closed. Some of you have requested more of these but unfortunately the logistics of getting these photocopied and posted for such a large primary school is just not possible.

Trying to re-create some routines and structures around learning, where possible, will be beneficial. Loose 'timetables' for school days, for example, with a mixture of learning and other activities can be helpful. When and how long your child spends on any activity is up to you, and as with most of life at the moment, flexibility is key.

Suggested 'school week' for home learners

What is reasonable during a 'school week' during closure?

We are very lucky that we subscribe to Doodle maths, tables, English and spellings which can be completed daily. There are links to all of these on [our home learning page](#).

The BBC are launching their Bitesize primary lessons (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/primary>) from today and these will support you as they offer daily lessons for each year group.

The Government backed Oak National Academy launch today with streamed lessons for every year group (<https://www.thenational.academy/online-classroom>)

Talking – every day some quality talking time

Reading - daily or sharing a book and practising sounds (phonics) with younger children

Writing - regularly (and writing for reason) is often best. The Jane Considine super sentence stacking lessons are great

Play some **maths** games or **counting** songs (number learning) White Rose maths is recommended

Exercise – every day (inside or out or both)

Computer / Gaming / Screen / TV time - as long as it's age-appropriate, time- limited and safe

Creative activities daily – like colouring, drawing, music and junk modelling

Twinkl Free access with the code cvdtwinklhelps is also an excellent resource

Learn some new **life skills** (learning recipes and cooking, telling the time on analogue and digital clocks, tying shoes laces, learning how to FaceTime - are all on your family lists to be achieved.

In addition to the activities outlined above, some families will have the time and resources to do much more of the suggested HAL being provided by the teachers.

Home Assisted Learning from Saltford School

Class teachers will set work for the week each Monday and place it on the class page of our website. A letter from your class teacher will also be posted on the class page of the school website on Monday morning.

Any HAL or other activities completed in the meantime, please email us at homelearning@saltfordschool.org.uk as we love to see what the children are doing. We may share some of these stories on our closed Twitter account.

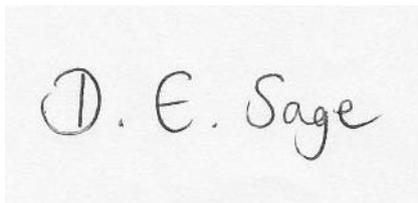
Please also stay safe online by checking the advice on our online safety page here.

I will be in touch as soon as possible with regard to the use of See Saw and further structured learning at home.

Our newsletter will be shared on Thursday as usual and will feature additional ideas in our home learning corner, extra project ideas from me and competitions through the Wellsway Academy Trust. You can also follow us on Twitter@SaltfordPrimary to share ideas and keep in touch with the school.

In the meantime, stay safe and well.

Yours sincerely

A photograph of a handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature reads "D. E. Sage". The letter 'D' is enclosed in a circle.

Mrs D Sage
Headteacher