

14 January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Hope you are all well and staying safe. I would like to thank you for your patience and understanding whilst we have all had to come to terms with the changes to learning over the past week. This has been a challenging time for schools across the country. I have been so impressed by how the staff at Almondsbury have risen to the challenge and create, what I think is an Outstanding remote learning provision for the children. Of course there were going to be teething problems, as stated in the previous letters; but for the majority of the parents and children the system is working fine.

Thank you to those who completed the parental survey sent out via email regarding the remote learning offer. I have received just over 100 responses in a 24 hour period, which is brilliant. Thank you all for your positive responses. It is good to gain your views and opinions on what we are doing and providing. I will outline the next steps to the responses in this letter and what is going to happen going forward.

Firstly, the vast majority of parents are very happy with the 'live' teaching lessons that are being provided currently and would like these to remain in place. We have considered a mix of live and recorded lessons but for the moment we will stick with the live lessons three times per day as outlined below.

The 'Live' lesson timings remain the same

Reception	Times	Years 1 and 2	Times
Phonics	10.00am	Mathematics	9.00am
Mathematics	11.30am	English/Phonics	11.00am
Topic/story time	2.00pm	Topic/science	1.45pm
Year 3 and 4	Times	Year 5 and 6	Times
Mathematics	9.15am	Mathematics	9.30am
English	10.30am	English	11.15am
Topic	1.15pm	Topic	1.30pm

- In addition to the live lessons we are trialling this coming week with Year 5 and 6, there will be breakout rooms within the zoom lessons for the children to discuss their learning and for a member of the staff to provide some group feedback and instruction. If this goes well we will roll it out to all year groups for use when it is appropriate. This may not be every live session, so please do not worry if it doesn't happen all of the time. We are also trialling small group work from Tuesday with Year 6 as well to aid independent work learning time. Again we shall be in touch should this be then rolled out across the school to support your children further.
- We are learning and adapting all of the time to the situation and trying to support you as best we can. Please bear in mind we are still teaching and supporting those children who are in school every day as well.

Secondly, we asked about the set up of Google classroom and the downloading and uploading of work once the children have completed this.

- We understand some parent's frustration on the set up of Google Classrooms. It is new for us all and patience is required. The set up was created for us by South Glos IT rather than ourselves, as they support our IT systems. We have hopefully ironed out the vast majority of set up issues. I apologise for anyone who is still experiencing difficulties. Please contact your class teacher to aid if they can.
- For the vast majority of children this is working well and the teachers are impressed by the amount of work being uploaded for feedback and sharing. Well done and keep working hard.

Thirdly, we asked about the level of communication and the timely nature of this.

- As you know we heard the announcement of school closure the same time as everyone else did. We do not receive prior notice from the DFE on these announcements so we have to move quickly. The actual DFE guidance was not sent to schools until Thursday evening last week. Therefore the

information that some parents wanted quicker was sent as soon as it could be. Since the start of this term we have had four changes in policy and guidance already to contend with so please bear with us. We will inform you of changes or differences as soon as we get them.

- The information of the letters last week, of which there were three, was what we could provide at the time. These were detailed and explained a large amount and did take some reading. However, it was important that you had all of the facts.
- Regarding the amount of texts and messages for the Zoom codes – as from Monday these will be streamlined. There will be one email to parents in each class clearly stating the class or year group it is aimed at. There will be a timetable attached with all of the zoom codes and which teacher is leading the live teaching sessions. This will aid you in organisation of the week and being consistent with the codes, etc. You will receive one text message to the whole school to let you know the email has been sent. Hopefully, this will be more helpful and easier to follow.
- In respect of teachers responses to parental or child requests. These will be done as soon as possible, However, there does need to be some element of patience as requested previously. Please don't expect an immediate reply to a message or email whilst the teacher is teaching live to all of the other children. This is just not possible. I know they are very flexible and brilliant at what they do but they are unable to answer these and teach up to 50 children online at the same time.

Fourthly, we asked if there were children and parents struggling with the lack of technology at home. If you do have old devices you are not using then these would be greatly received in school for us to loan out. We have some devices coming from the LA but these are few in number and won't be here until the start of February. Unlike what has been reported in the press we actually haven't received any of the DFE laptops as yet and we will only receive a small number.

If you are having trouble then please follow the guides below to convert games consoles. Please do let me know if you need additional data as I can complete the forms to access for parents. Most of the mobile and fixed networks are offering packages of data for educational use. The government are also working with mobile network providers to supply additional data for devices i.e. smartphones, for those that need it. As parents, you are not able to apply for this yourselves as it has to go through the school. If you require additional data to aid remote learning engagement please contact myself on Paul.Smith@almondsburyprimary.co.uk and I will work with you to access this.

If you have a games console ie Xbox or Playstation or mobile phone you can use these to access the remote learning on Google classroom. Please follow this link for information on how to do this.

https://www.google.co.uk/amp/s/edtechawesomeness.com/2020/03/17/access-google-classroom-with-your-phone-your-xbox-or-your-playstation/amp/?fbclid=IwAR0IS1iGzDY5IKNFJlQMhE20dfTHtdv00jXOIqLy_v6CTYUxXzla25TAFA

Please do let us know if you are struggling with access to technology that will allow your child/ren to join in with the live sessions. We may be able to assist in some way.

Reminders -

If you have any questions or queries regarding the remote/online learning offer please contact either your child's class teachers for specific information or myself for generic ones. We are here to support you all. I am sure you will be amazing supporting your child/ren in the coming weeks. Well done for finishing the first full week only 4 more to go until half term! ☺ We don't know what will happen after that so watch this space.

For the children to be able to continue reading, please do log on to the Reading Planet website with the log on details that were sent home alongside the explanatory letter before the Christmas holidays. I know you probably had other things to do over the holidays but very few have actually logged on. This is the only way that the children will be able to continue reading, if not coming into school to change books. The class teachers will be monitoring the usage of this and encouraging the children to read daily. There are quizzes at the end of each book they read and they can win points for themselves and their class.

The children can also use Times Tables Rock Stars from Year 1 upwards to keep going with their times table learning. Once again the teachers have placed 'battles' between the houses and classes within their key phase.

Don't forget to join in with the key phase worship meetings with children, if you are able to. These are at different times to the live learning and should be able to fit into the suggested structured day that are set and posted on the class webpages.

Key phase	Day	Time	Zoom
Reception and Years 1 and 2	Monday	2.45pm	The codes are the same for the whole term and are on the timetables from the teachers.
Years 3 and 4	Wednesday	11.30am	
Years 5 and 6	Friday	11.00am	

We hope that you and your families all stay safe and healthy and hope to see you all soon.

Email address: office@almondsburyprimary.co.uk

Website: www.almondsburyprimary.co.uk

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P.D. Smith', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mr Paul D Smith
Head Teacher