

Sunnylands Primary School

**6th January 2021**

Dear Parent/Guardian/Sunnylands Family,

It is hard to put into words how we in school feel as we now write to you to confirm that online learning is now set to continue until February half-term. I walked around an almost empty school yesterday, with kids names on coat pegs, wellies hanging up etc and VERY quiet corridors, it was a sad sight. I looked at all the names and thought about the smiling faces that usually fill our corridors and all the excited voices as they interact with each other and with us, the staff. It really is a very strange feeling to be in school without the rest of our school family and we miss all our children terribly!

I also want to pay tribute to the very hard work that all staff had carried out throughout the whole of the first term. We knew that children had missed a number of months of school and therefore may not necessary have reached the level they normally would and so efforts were made to ensure our children progressed rapidly and they did! Our children worked extremely hard in all areas of their learning with continual commitment of all staff and indeed the commitment of you, our parents. We are confident our pupils have made significant progress in all areas of their learning.

We now face another period of extended closure and I wish to outline to you the measures we are putting into place to ensure that our children continue to advance their learning.

P1-P3 are now working through SeeSaw and teachers are uploading work to this platform daily. As we progress into next week teachers will begin to teach, via short videos, on SeeSaw as well as setting work. This will mean children will hear their teacher’s voice and see them, hopefully this will help your child keep connected and will also allow you to hear how the phonic sound is taught etc. I have seen lots of pupil responses to work today and even heard a few wee voices recording answers and messages back to teachers- it’s been lovely!

P4-P7 are progressing through the work that has been set and teachers are responding to this too. As we progress into next week P4 and P5 will continue to do similar to this week however as for the lower school there will be short video explanations on what to do when a new topic is being introduced. P6 and P7 teachers are preparing paper based work which will sit alongside the online learning. I will let you know shortly when this is available for collection, it is likely to be Friday or Monday. P6 and P7 teachers will also record short videos to explain new learning. We would also ask that you take pictures of your child’s written work and upload this into Google classroom so that teachers can acknowledge their hard work and give feedback. P4-P7 will continue to work through Google classroom.

You will appreciate that all of this online teaching takes a lot of planning and also a lot of work throughout the day as the teachers mark and respond to your child’s work however we all feel that this will be reflected in the opportunity it gives your child to progress their learning.

I would ask that you bear with us as we all learn how to post videos and explain how to complete work in a medium that is unfamiliar to many of us, we are learning too!

Teachers will be available through the online platforms only during school hours, this provides time in the evenings for preparation of work.

I want to again say how extremely grateful I am to have staff who are so hardworking and continually ensure that our children are given the best opportunities to progress.

Please be assured that if your child experiences any difficulty during this period the teacher will be able to see this and can work to assist them on their return to school. We know how difficult it is for you to manage this alongside everything else that has to be done in your household, we understand and I would ask that you do not stress over any aspect of this work. I am in school each day and can be contacted if you are having particular difficulties that I can assist with.

The Department of Education have requested once again that school make provision for key worker, if there is no possible alternative childcare arrangements, and vulnerable children.

I must stress that children coming into school will simply be being ‘looked after’ as there will be **no facility for face to face teaching**. All teaching staff will be involved in online learning and therefore your child will simply be facilitated by non-teaching staff to complete this learning. This provision will only be available during the days/hours that you are working. Please note that there will be no school meals available during this period, packed lunch will be needed.

If you feel that you require this provision to be made please email me, as soon as possible, at [jlyons481@c2kni.net](mailto:jlyons481@c2kni.net) in order that I can make plans for this.

Please state the name(s) of your child/children, your role as a keyworker(s), as well as the days/hours you require this provision, this will simply be during normal school hours ie 9am start and usual finishing time for your child.

We are living in very different circumstances than usual and we are learning how to cope with ever changing circumstances, for some this is more difficult than others, we understand this. Please reach out to us if you are struggling in any way and we will help you.

I cannot wait to welcome everyone back again as soon as we are able.

Keep safe,

Joanne Lyons