

Upham Primary School

Church of England (Aided)

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Headteacher: Mr David Woolley, B.Ed. (Hons)



Wednesday 30 September 2020

Dear Parents,

Re: Our Plan for how we intend to approach Remote Learning

I am writing to outline our plan for how we intend to deliver 'remote learning' so that children can keep up, even if not at school. This is a complicated area so my apologies for another, rather long and detailed letter.

During lockdown we delivered 'home-learning' which was entirely reactionary to the situation we all found ourselves in. 'Remote learning' is the attempt to be proactive, to plan for provision during times of closure, such as if a bubble were closed down (such as in the event of a confirmed COVID case) or the whole school under a local or national directive. I emphasise that neither scenarios are suspected at the moment, this material is entirely 'in readiness'. There will also be children isolating at home, perhaps whilst they or household members wait for a test. The DfE have produced guidance which states:

Where a class, group or small number of pupils need to self-isolate, or there is a local lockdown requiring pupils to remain at home, we expect schools to have the capacity to offer immediate remote education. Schools are expected to consider how to continue to improve the quality of their existing offer and have a strong contingency plan in place for remote education provision by the end of September. (DFE, Guidance for Full Opening: Schools, 17 Sept)

Some Overall Thoughts for Our Plan

What is the key aim?

Our key aim is that a child who cannot be at school can access the learning which was planned by the teacher and that when they return, they blend back into school and continue this learning journey. This is not an alternative to being in school and is only for those contexts where an enforced isolation would occur. If a child is feeling well enough to work at home (assuming no COVID symptoms), then they are well enough to be in school and should be.

What is the key challenge and the key approach?

The key challenge for making learning remotely available is the time it takes to do so, without this adversely affecting the teaching in the classroom, just at the time when teachers need to be entirely focussed on maximising learning and addressing gaps.

We have been working to solve this issue over the last few weeks and have used advice from the Hampshire Primary Inspectorate Team who have advised '*we do not propose that schools create an additional remote version of all content just in case it is needed by an individual or group of pupils as this may create a workload issue disproportionate to the benefit*' (Hampshire Inspectorate & Advisory Service, Sept 2020).

Our plan is therefore to make available on the website, two days worth of activities that can be used whenever required. These will be drawn from the key ideas for that class and used to reinforce and practice skills already covered. Critically, they do not contain new learning which would require some input and guidance. At the moment an isolation is announced, children would be directed to use these 'two-day-emergency' resources. This would 'buy the teacher some time' to convert their plans into remote learning plans – or if they are providing for some whilst others are in school, to distribute materials a day or so after having delivered them in-class. There are also additional curriculum projects to dip into that provide learning across the curriculum to supplement the Day 1 & 2 pages which could easily last 3 to 4 days if required.

How will materials be shared?

The website is the key mechanism to make materials available. The two-day emergency resources already have their own pages – under the Curriculum Tab, select 'Our Remote Curriculum' where there is a gateway page with guidance (including a copy of this letter). This then shows links to each Class's Remote Learning Page.

Some materials have already been published and teachers will be working on developing others over the coming weeks. Further information can be added onto the website, just as the home-learning pages were used during the closure. If only a small number of individuals required material for perhaps a short period of time, then it may be easier to email materials directly rather than use the website. Extensive use would be made of the excellent online resources which are available such as 'The Oak Academy', 'BBC' and 'White Rose' materials.

We are also exploring other technologies which may be of use in future situations. Providing remote learning will grow and evolve as the term progresses, the current situation is just the starting point of the plan.

We hope to learn from the things that worked well during the closure but also develop our approach from the 'home-learning' and the results from the governor questionnaire sent on 29/9 to parents, will also be used to further inform our developing strategy.

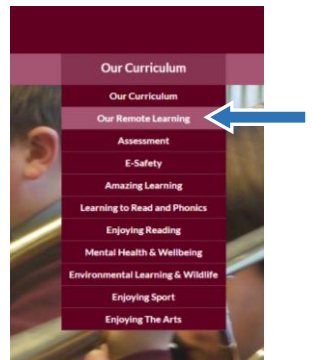
How are things different for Class 1?

Class 1 are still learning through play. At this point in the year, we are just carefully introducing short bursts of other learning such as number work or phonics. It is therefore very difficult to set tasks for remote learning.

What we would try to do is suggest activities that would mirror the sort of general provision available during play, such as opportunities for construction toys or imaginative 'small world' play with some other short games or activities described. We would also encourage children to follow their own interests; the best learning is to become immersed in something they want to do, be that building a ship out of cardboard boxes or digging to find worms to draw!

Why is it so difficult to recreate learning from the classroom?

Teaching by its fundamental nature is a communicative, interactive process. Teachers model and present something and then through carefully formed, probing questions, enable the child to think and respond. They assess this response to work out if the child has achieved understanding or not and plan what the next action or question should be to move that understanding forward. This process cannot be recreated with just a worksheet or a video to watch. Inevitably, remote learning can never be as beneficial as being in the classroom – which is why remote learning is not an alternative to school but an emergency response. Of course, as children get older, their own learning skills develop so a more remote approach becomes more relevant for older students. Remote learning is particularly difficult to achieve for our youngest Year R and 1 children who are still learning through play experiences and do not have the reading or language skills yet to be completely independent learners.



Why can't teacher's planning be made available to follow?

Teaching in class always needs to be adaptive; changing in reaction to how well things have been learned. Teachers therefore do not plan everything in advance, more the progression of learning stages. They do this in technical ways using references to statutory documents that are like a second language to us. There is nothing secret about these plans but they would be very difficult for the majority of people to turn into a meaningful activity. For example, here is an example of just the input for a Class 4 session:

<i>Learning Outcome:</i> I can use the bar model to represent finding fractions of integers.	<i>Input:</i> Put a 'find a fraction of an integer' style worded question Discuss how to solve – strategies, clarify operations sequence for calculation Model how to use the bar model to represent the problem – repeat with increasing numbers to challenge (make links to common multiples and factors knowledge)
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This is why a more child-and-parent-friendly explanation and approach was used throughout the home-learning and will also be used throughout the remote provision.

Some 'What if' Scenarios

What would happen if a bubble or the whole school was temporarily closed?

If a bubble (ie Class) was closed, the notice is likely to be very short – most likely in response to a parent telling us of a confirmed COVID case. We would initially direct the children to complete the first two days of emergency remote learning on the Class pages on the website.

The class teacher would also be required to isolate and from home would begin adapting their planning for remote delivery. After the initial two days, materials would be emailed out/ posted on the website, in a similar fashion to the home learning (though, as mentioned previously, this is evolving). Children would be asked to send particular pieces of work back to their teacher via the class email accounts so their teacher can assess and use to form the next steps.

This sort of closure is likely to be short lived over a couple of weeks (the isolation period being 14 days). Material provided would be enough for a usual school day and cover the whole curriculum. On return, this learning would then carry on in class.

This situation would be complicated if the teacher was themselves too unwell to work and we would endeavour to do our best to make provision in this context.

What would happen if my child needs to isolate at home due to a family member having symptoms?

This scenario is likely to be short lived. If the family member arranges a test, the remote learning would only be required until such time as a negative result is returned – probably a few days. We would direct the child to complete the emergency day 1 & 2 material on the class Remote pages, dipping into the curriculum packs if more is needed. On return to school a couple of days later, any gaps can be relatively straightforwardly addressed, much as if they had just been off ill for a day or two.

What if my child is isolating for a longer period of time, perhaps they have a positive result but symptoms are very mild?

If a child is ill then they should rest and recuperate. However, if they were in themselves fine, but forced to complete the isolation period of 10 days, they too would first complete the 2 day emergency material on the remote class pages. The classteacher would endeavour to send materials which have been used in class. This is likely to be via email if just an individual. Correspondence can be maintained via the class emails so that learning can be assessed and feedback provided. The classteacher of course is still teaching the rest of the class across the day so this needs to be fitted in as efficiently as possible. It would also be important to prioritise the in-class teaching taking place for the majority.

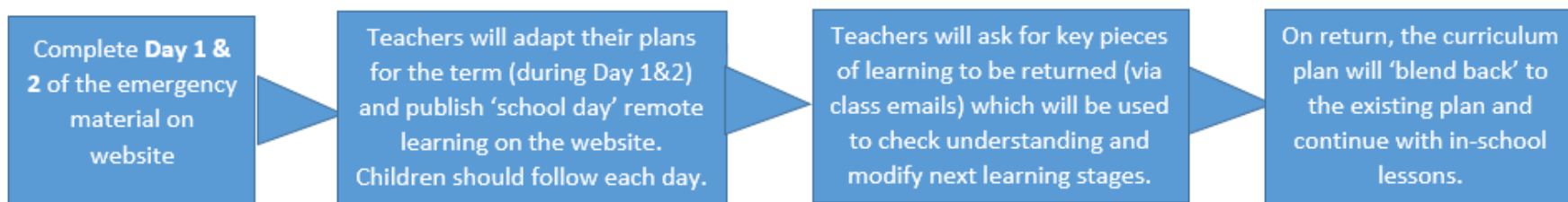
This chart may explain the different situations more clearly:

What if your child is ill?

If they are ill and cannot come to school they should rest and recuperate; if they would be well enough to some work, they should be in school. When they return to school, we will catch-them-up as much as possible.

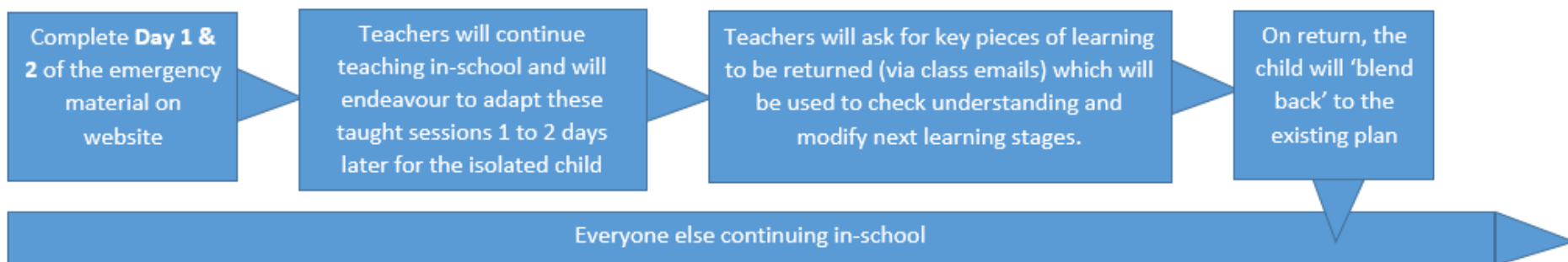
What if my child's bubble or the whole school is isolating, due to a closure?

If we were required to send a whole bubble home or if the whole school were to be forced to temporarily close due to a local-lockdown, they should follow the remote learning which staff will adapt from that already planned. On return, this will blend back into the existing plan to the term.



What if my child is needing to isolate at home because they have COVID symptoms or someone else in the household does?

If a child is unwell themselves, they should rest and recuperate. At the point when they are well enough to complete some work/ or if they themselves are well but are isolating due to a family member, they should complete the remote learning with the aim of blending back with the learning in the class when they return:



What if my child is isolating whilst waiting for a COVID test?

If they are unwell they should rest and recuperate, regardless of if the symptoms are COVID or not. If they are able to work but needing to isolate awaiting test results, this should complete within a day or two so any missed learning can be caught up on return to school. However, the Day 1 & 2 emergency plan materials could be used.

This letter, the chart and further explanation is available on the school website, under the Curriculum Tab> Our Remote Curriculum Page, so you do not need to commit the contents of this letter to memory! Should a closure occur we will give direction at the time and then throughout.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "D. Woolley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'y' at the end.

David Woolley
Headteacher