

Dear parents and carers,

Firstly, I hope you and your families are all well as we end our first official week of home learning and isolation. We are all having to make huge adjustments to our normal lives and having to do things so differently to what we had planned as we head towards the Easter holidays. I am thankful that the sun has shone this week as it has made the transition to being at home a little bit easier as we are able to spend time outside in the garden, or going for our daily walk outside.

Bourn Club

This week, we have established Bourn Club, the childcare for key workers who are providing a vital service in the national response to COVID-19. On behalf of all those in the school community, I would like to extend our thanks to all our parents who are on the frontline of this response. We are truly grateful for all that you are doing. Since the government instructions to stay indoors, we now have fewer children in the Bourn Club as options for looking after children at home have become more viable. For those families where there is no alternative, it is our privilege to look after your children as you look after those who need your care.

Home Learning

For most children this has been the first week of home learning and for most parents, the first experience of teaching your children and trying to work from home at the same time. This is a huge challenge for all concerned, so don't be hard on yourself if it hasn't quite gone according to plan! It's a good idea to set up a 'timetable' because children do need structure and routine and the best way to do this seems to be two 'school work' sessions in the morning and lots of other activities after lunch. The children in Bourn Club have been doing gardening, den building, art and craft activities and spending lots of time outside getting fresh air and topping up vitamin D!

We are sending home learning packs weekly (you should have received one by email this afternoon for next week) in order to give guidance and ideas, and a way of keeping your child focused. If you had previously told us that you were not able to print out these documents, and you are now able to, please do let us know because printing and posting these is now more difficult to do logistically and is taking me a lot of time. **Please note that we will not be sending packs for the Easter holidays. The next pack will be sent on Monday 20 April.**

We have been developing the pupil pages on the website <https://www.bournschool.co.uk/pupils/> and they now contain lots of links to different activities. Pupils can also find competitions and challenges on their Class Blogs (from Y1-Y6) on PurpleMash. Pupils should click on the Sharing icon at the top of the page, and then 'Shared Blogs'. They can post a message to let us know how they are and what they've been up to. There is also a huge range of ideas that are being shared on line too – Joe Wicks PE at 9am is proving very popular! This link is an article that tells you how to do it on different devices, or if you want to view on catch up <https://www.techradar.com/uk/news/how-to-watch-joe-wicks-pe-workout-online-march-27>. Also of interest, Young Voices have started doing some live sing along sessions- some days at 11. They're on Facebook but are uploading them on to youtube afterwards. This is the first one. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e-rHkC4MJxc&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR1aM_6nT38u1q7FrrR54oF-FVO7mbBFi3aWzdIRGipJE9GoPhiN16FdwOQ

Checking In Calls

Your child's teacher will be calling once a week to talk to your child to see how they are getting on with the work and generally. This is very much a checking-in phone call and not a checking up one. Please note that as teachers are not using school phones, the number will show as 'withheld'. The teachers have loved talking to the children and hearing what they have been doing. I have spoken to

all the teachers today and they have loved speaking to the children and parents. **Teachers will not be calling in the Easter holidays.** Children have been cooking, gardening, planting vegetables, riding bikes and doing lots of great outdoor activities. We absolutely have to see this as an opportunity to do things with our children in a way we just don't normally have time for.

Mental and Emotional Wellbeing

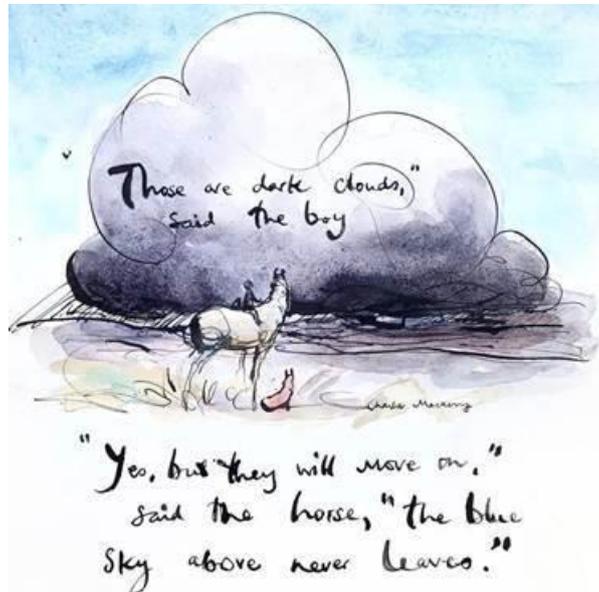
These are exceptional times and the situation we face is certain to cause all of us, adults and children a level of anxiety we have not faced before. This anxiety is not just mental, it is also physical, cognitive and behavioural. We may see things in ourselves or our family members such as stomach upsets, insomnia, changes to eating (I hope it's not just me who is eating massive amounts of chocolate), difficulty in thinking straight, wanting to hibernate, being snappy, tearful or overwhelmed etc. These are all normal responses to excessive stress and are caused by the brain releasing chemicals such as cortisol or adrenaline to help the body in its 'fight or flight' response to danger. The added element is that we are all in the same situation and a 'group fear' situation like a pandemic results in anxiety being even more infectious than the virus. So, now more than ever, we need to look after ourselves and our loved ones. Things like breathing exercises, talking to someone via video link or on the phone, do silly things and laugh, do something involving art/craft or make something, exercise, get out in the sunshine and **stay away from social media and 24 hour news bulletins.** Limit your news watching and don't let the children see or hear the news, they know all they need to know and they need to be protected from the ongoing situation.

Be Kind to Yourself

Be kind to yourself and don't make this more stressful than it already is. Make your favourite meals, watch comfort TV, read trashy novels, make cake, eat chocolate, sit in the garden and do nothing. Most importantly, do not fall out with your children about school work. Try to keep them in a routine of doing some work every weekday - for your sanity as much as their academic progress - but if that does not work for you, do not worry. It is more important that we all get through this together with the people we live with, as happily as possible. Education is a marathon, not a sprint and if children miss 12 weeks of learning, they will catch up and we will help them.

Hope and Friendship

Two of our school values that will guide how we respond. We will get through this, we will change and grow and there are many opportunities and positives that show themselves. We are in this all together and we will support each other in every way we can. 'There are dark clouds, but the blue sky above never leaves.'



Take care,

Laura

Laura Latham
Headteacher