

Subject: Home learning four weeks in

Date sent: 28<sup>th</sup> April 2020, 4:31pm

## Great Barford C of E Primary Academy

Dear Parents and Carers,

As I promised in my last email, I just wanted to talk to you about home learning four weeks in.

Home learning has been a learning curve for us all, not least us, the teaching staff. We understand that you as parents are running busy homes, caring for your children and in some cases elderly dependents, as well as continuing with your own jobs. On top of this, we are sending you home learning tasks to complete with your children and some children do not always want to cooperate with this; they may feel that they are in their own home, not in school. We do appreciate that this is difficult and stressful because you will want to support your children and ensure that they are not falling behind. One reason we understand this is because as a staff we are having the same stresses and difficulties in our own households. Many of our staff are caring for children and dependents, family members who are or who have suffered with the virus, and in some cases coping with the loss of loved ones.

For these reasons, we have, at the moment, a reduced staff who are available to work either on site or at home. Furthermore, due to opening our care facility over the Easter holiday, up-coming school holidays and the Bank holidays, some staff are taking their annual leave during what would normally be term time. Despite this, we endeavour to deliver home learning to you on a Sunday to help your support your children for the following week.

We have taken on board your suggestions where work has been challenging in the home environment, and changed our approach. We have also taken on board your comments about things that are working really well in particular classes and we will roll these ways of working out across other year groups. This will take time to implement because of the reasons described above.

We have decided at this point in time, for these reasons and also reasons related to ensuring the safeguarding of children, that we cannot provide virtual lessons. We are looking at alternatives, and these will appear in future planning.

We continue to offer care for the children of key workers and vulnerable groups. At the moment, it is the families of key workers who are mainly using the facility and our numbers are low. This picture is reflected nationally. I just wanted to share with you what the vulnerable category looks like. If your child has an EHCP (you will have been through a lengthy application process with the Borough Council in order to access this), is considered to be, or has previously been considered to be, Looked After, if your family has a social worker or works closely with social care through 'Team Around the Family' and 'Child in Need' meetings, they are eligible to access the care in school. The care is provided by one teacher and one

teaching assistant (this would increase if we had more children attending) and the children are offered access to the home learning tasks with the support of a member of staff, as well as a range of other activities. If you feel that, your child falls into one of these categories and you would like to take up a place, please contact the school via [admin@gbpa.org.uk](mailto:admin@gbpa.org.uk) and we will get back to you as soon as possible. At this stage, we are not permitted by the government to admit other groups.

If your child has an Individual Education Plan, you will already have received an updated plan from Mrs Browning. During the week beginning Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May you will also receive a call from Mrs Browning who will talk to you about how things are going and offer support to you where we can.

As a staff, we are desperate to get back to school and work with your children. We are missing them all. We sincerely thank you for all of your lovely emails, these have kept us going.

I have attached a document you might find useful to help structure your child's day at home should you need it.

Please keep talking to us. We love to hear from you and we will always do our best to accommodate your requests in these difficult times,

Kind regards,

Sarah Evans  
Headteacher