



YSGOL GYNRADD A MEITHRIN STRYD SIORS GEORGE STREET PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL

Wainfelin Road, Pontypool, Torfaen NP4 6BX

Thursday 21 January 2021

Dear parent/carers

I am writing to provide you with some additional information regarding home learning. This information reflects the Welsh Government (WG) guidance issued this month which sets out expectations for schools and parents and which underpins our arrangements for home learning in George Street.

This year's changing circumstances have required great flexibility and resilience as learning for the vast majority of pupils has moved from school to home. I am very grateful to you for supporting your child's learning at this difficult time. Until these circumstances change, we will continue to set work for your child(ren) to do, maintain contact and provide you with help along the way. Any encouragement and support you offer is enormously helpful, but you are not being asked to be a teacher. I hope that the information provided below will help make clear the way that your child is currently being asked to learn.

DEFINITIONS

You may hear home-learning discussed in lots of ways. There are many different terms being used in the media. The list below helps explain what some of the most common ones mean.

Blended Learning: An approach that combines face to face and distance learning experiences. Face to face learning and distance learning should complement each other and should be driven by a single curriculum.

Synchronous Learning: Teachers and learners attend a session/lesson at the same time. This can take place face to face or online. This includes our 'live' sessions in key stage 2.

Remote Learning: This means the same as distance learning or home learning.

Asynchronous Learning: Teachers provide learning materials which can be accessed by the learner in their own time.

For example, recordings of staff reading stories, uploaded Read Write Inc videos or Youtube material for pupils to watch.

Online learning: Is education that takes place over the Internet. It is often referred to as "e-learning" among other terms. However, online learning is just one type of 'distance learning'. This may include using learning platforms like MyON or Mathletics, accessing content on BBC Bitesize or activities uploaded to Seesaw.

Face to Face Learning: Refers to the learning your child receives when they are inside an educational setting i.e. at school.

DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO DELIVERING LEARNING

Individual schools and settings will take different approaches to delivering learning during this period. One model of delivery will not suit all schools or all learners and the approach schools use will vary according to their context.

Staff in George Street use a variety of methods to engage pupils in their learning.

These include:

- Pre-recorded material from staff to explain and set the scene for learning (asynchronous – e.g. RWI videos).
- Sessions delivered via live streaming (synchronous e.g. live sessions).
- Learning tasks which may need completing online, in books, using reading books or creative and hands-on activities (e.g. building models, carrying out experiments, recording videos, using MyON).
- Shared learning where learners may be able to learn with their peers (for example, collaborating with others to create a presentation as part of a project activity).
- Using the text/voice messaging function within Seesaw to support pupils with their learning and to provide feedback and encouragement.
- Independent activities, for example: researching a subject or topic, completing a life-skill task or watching a TV programme such as those the BBC has on offer to assist schools to deliver learning.
- Providing online and telephone check-in sessions to support pupil's learning and well-being.
- Signposting to additional and extension activities. For example: fitness sessions, going for a local walk, outdoor play (in line with WVG guidance).

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM US

- Your child's class teacher will continue to set work on a weekly basis with clear guidance and where appropriate support, for your child(ren) to complete.
- They will monitor your child's work and provide appropriate feedback and follow-up. This will include contacting you to offer support where pupils are not engaging.
- Teachers will provide in-person contact, either through live sessions or phone calls to maintain contact with pupils and families. A copy of next week's live session timetable for pupils in key stage 2 is printed below.
- We will provide work in paper format where there is no access to internet, hardware or regular stationary (paper, pens etc.).
- Our communication about distance learning to parents/carers will be simple and accessible to all.
- We will continue to communicate regularly with you using text messages, newsletters and through the school website.
- We will ask you as parents/carers to provide your views on our learning provision and will continue to refine this giving consideration to your feedback.

w/b 25.01.2021	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 6
Monday	11.30 Check in/weekly planner	10.00 Check in/weekly planner	11.00 – 11.30 Penfro 11.30 – 12.00 Caerdydd Check in/weekly planner	14.00 Check in/weekly planner
Tuesday		10.00 Literacy		09.30 Literacy
Wednesday	11.00 Maths session	10.00 Maths	11.00 - 11.40 Literacy/Forest School session	
Thursday	11.00 Literacy session		11.00 – 11.30 Penfro 11.30 – 12.00 Caerdydd Maths Bingo session	10.30 Maths
Friday	11.30 Check out/assembly	09.30 Check out/assembly	11.00 Penfro 11.30 Caerdydd Spellings/Check out/assembly	10.00 Check out/assembly

THREE WAYS YOU CAN HELP

1. It is important that you contact us if you have any questions, queries or concerns. Staff are on hand in school to assist and support wherever possible so please contact our office using the phone number or email at the top of this letter and we will work with you to try and resolve any difficulties.
2. Try to avoid comparing the approaches to learning that other children are receiving in other classes or in other schools. Our staff are working hard to ensure that we provide the most appropriate approaches to learning to meet the needs of your child. There is never a 'one size fits all' when it comes to learning but we will provide a consistent approach that means you can be clear about the expectations for your child's learning and how they will be supported by school.
3. Help pupils meet the expectations for live sessions (in key stage 2) and ensure that they show appropriate regard for their own and other's safety when using online platforms. For instance, by making sure they are always properly attired in any images posted to Seesaw.

READ,WRITE INC

Read,Write Inc (RWI) is used in school as a phonics program to develop pupil's reading skills. It is a systematic programme that develops pupil's knowledge of letters and sounds so that they can use their understanding to build up words to read (and write) with independence.



Because pupils develop these skills in small steps they are taught in groups according to the stage they are at. Each stage uses specific materials that help pupils to make progress towards the next stage or 'colour'. Staff work with small groups for short sessions on a daily basis in school to support their progress.

As part of our home learning arrangements, RWI materials for all groups are being uploaded each week to Seesaw for use at home. These resources include 'speed sound sheets', tutorial videos presented by staff who model and explain activities and a weekly book (for older groups).

It is highly beneficial for pupils who are completing the RWI programme, whatever their age, to use these resources each week – preferably by revisiting them in short but frequent sessions (as little as 10-15 minutes at a time). Where pupils used these resources and accompanying videos to practise their skills during the last lockdown they continued to make good progress in what is an essential skill not just for reading but for all future learning too.

If you need to check which RWI group your child is in or to ask for further advice please just contact school.

RETURNING TO SCHOOL

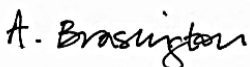
As you know, the WG will announce a decision about any changes to school provision as part of its three weekly review of the current lockdown on January 29th.

As a school we are keen for all of our pupils to return to face-to-face learning as soon as it is deemed safe for us to reopen. We will advise you of any change to the current arrangements at our earliest opportunity. In the meantime can we please encourage all of our children and families to follow the current lockdown measures fully to ensure that you and others remain safe.

It is sad to note that anecdotally we do hear of children enjoying 'sleepovers' with friends and relatives. We are in no position to check the accuracy of this information or to report non-compliance with the restrictions. However, it would be very disappointing at a time when we are trying to reduce infections if this sort of action is taking place in our community. Difficult as it is, the better we stick with the restrictions now, the sooner the situation will improve and the safer we will be.

Finally, thank you again for all the support you are showing for children's learning at home. It is no easy task but the encouragement and motivation you provide is enormously valuable.

Kind regards,



Mr A Brasington