

Sunday 24th January 2021,

Dear Parents and Carers of Sir Alexander Fleming Primary School and Nursery,

Well, this is not the welcome back to school that we had hoped for, but I am sure we all fully understand the need for such extreme restrictions. At school, we are so impressed with the learning the children have shared on Seesaw so far, the work completed in the paper packs, the engagement of children and families and your absolute patience and understanding.

We never wanted to be in this situation again and stopping children from attending school goes against everything we stand for. We miss teaching 30 children within a classroom: it’s just not the same without the hustle, bustle, noise and commotion! It is why we do the job in the first place.

I know that teachers are contacting you to see how you are getting on with learning activities, either through Seesaw or by telephone, and asking how they can support you further. The job of a teacher has now changed significantly: they are running classes, sorting home learning, offering advice and support and, if I’m completely honest with you, as I always am, they are exhausted. I am extremely proud of how hard the teaching team are working. If you get a minute, please just send them a quick message of thanks, it goes such a long way!

We have a limited number of laptops within school that we can offer to children to support their home learning. If you are struggling to use an unsuitable device, please give us a call, email or contact your class teacher through Seesaw and we can try to support you.

Now, I turn to you! What you, as parents and carers, have been asked to do over the next couple of weeks, maybe more, is an impossible task. Working from home, parenting and teaching are three very different jobs and it is extremely difficult to try to do all three at the same time. You are not doing it wrong; it is hard, it is difficult! I know many teachers who are working all day delivering online lessons or teaching classes and then having to go home and start supporting their older children with GCSE work – it is difficult, tiring and frustrating! We know that most of you are doing the best you can!

When our children are in school, we have an expectation that they work as hard as they can and they always give their ‘best’ effort. We would expect exactly the same from them when they are at home with you. We want you all to try your best!

Do what you can! Most of the KS2 children (Year 3-6) should be able to access the activities on Seesaw and complete them with some support or no support. If you need any help because you don’t understand something, then give us a call or message the teacher through Seesaw – they will help you! Please do not feel guilty if something gets missed. It always helps if you do all the activities as lessons are planned as a sequence but find what is best for you and your family.

If that means you take the learning outside and go for a walk, share a book, bake a cake, build a snowman, do some gardening, then so be it! Please take photographs and put them on Seesaw.

If it all becomes too much and the arguments start, then choose being together as your activity. Choose playing a game together, choose making a cheese sandwich, choose laughing and writing jokes.

Well done to all of you! You are surviving a pandemic! Whatever your personal circumstances, we think you are doing a great job! Our children need to be safe, happy and healthy – we are lucky: we are alive, and we are survivors - many people have not been.

If you feel yourself getting stressed (you will), stop, take a break, do something else, come back to it later. Always ask for help! We are all in this together. Keep yourselves safe, mentally! Although we are ‘closed’ to many of you, we are still here emotionally for all our families. If you need support, a chat, a virtual cuppa, a cry…… we are here!

Take care, stay safe and remember we think you are amazing!

Much love and miss you all,

Katy Tomlinson

Headteacher