24th April 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope this week has been blessed with good health and special moments with family. So many of you are doing such a great job at supporting your children at home. Thank you.

It is clear we are all doing what we can to work together to ensure the children are safe and learning. I never imagined that you would be home schooling your child this year or that we would be finding such a different way to educate our fabulous pupils. I hear so much in the media about parents being unsure about how to teach their children. I have also received such lovely emails from you to say how much you appreciate the teachers and the job they do every day. I know I value our staff team very much.

Remember, you are your child’s first teacher. Please step back to look at the amazing children you have and what you see is a reflection of what wonderful parents you are – what wonderful teachers you really are. As teachers, we are so privileged to learn with your children every day in school and we see the wonderful teachers you truly are. We hope you also experience what a privilege it is to learn with your children every day as well, during this lockdown. Of course, we miss every child very much, we miss seeing you, we miss seeing our colleagues but we understand that this is an unprecedented time and how important it is that we all do our bit to stop the spread of the virus, by staying at home.

Like you, we are all finding new ways of working. It is hard to believe we have only had 15 days of no school. Our phenomenal teaching staff continue to working extremely hard to plan the home learning for the children. They have truly enjoyed calling you and the children this week. I would like to thank you for being so kind to them. It has meant so much to them. So many of our staff are living away from family and friends so they too are finding a new normal as well as working from home. I know so many of you will all be able to relate to this. Next week, we are trialling TA’s making calls to some children to talk through the home learning. We hope this is also warmly welcomed as we continue to enhance our provision.

**Seesaw**

On Wednesday we launched our exploration of Seesaw. This will go live from Monday and my fingers remain crossed that this works well. The home learning for the class, for non-specialist subjects, will be linked on the platform. This may be quicker for you to access than using the Q1E site.

When I met with staff for staff meeting on Wednesday afternoon, I can’t tell you how their faces lit up when they were telling us about the work that had been posted and how quickly it had been sent in. Thank you so much for making this such a special experience for them. I am sure there was equal joy experienced by the children when they received the teacher response.

One thing that we need to highlight if you have more than one child, is that you need to use a ***separate***email address for each child in your family. You cannot register more than one child on the same email address as this causes problems across profiles. I have no doubt this may cause you a problem and I do apologise but I hope that you can set up an account to resolve the access problem.

**Online Workshop**

Thank you for attending the online workshop we organised to ensure we supported you with the huge responsibility you have to keep your children safe online during this lockdown. We hope you learnt something valuable. If you were unable to attend, we will be adding the details on the website next week.

**Home Learning - next week**

On Monday, the activities planned will cover the summer term curriculum. This will be new learning for many of the children so they may need a little more guidance than they have before but this will depend on the individual child. When the teachers have been planning these activities, which is very different to how they plan for lessons they teach, they have tried to include all the necessary detail to result in the expected learning outcomes. For the last 15 days of home learning, I have encouraged you to do the activities but as we start the summer term curriculum I would like to ask you kindly to do all you can to ensure the children do as much of the home learning set, as possible. I absolutely appreciate that every household has a different schedule and that the children may not get through all the activities. All I ask is that you do what you can, and what feels right for your child, each day. I attach a really helpful maths document that the trust has produced to help you navigate the maths plans and hope this proves a valuable source of guidance.

**Parent Gym - free online parent support modules**

So many of us know the fabulous opportunity we had to attend the Parent Gym sessions at BWA. Please see the message below, in blue, from the very gracious and generous PG team.

I hope you all stay safe this weekend and through next week. I am sure you will join me in thanking the awesome Key Workers who are doing so much to keep us safe and care for our loved ones. It can be easy to get frustrated at the limitations imposed. Every day, I do feel so blessed that we can work together to keep each other safe. Enjoy this precious time with your loved ones.

With my very best wishes,

Seana Henry

Headteacher

Dear Parents,

Even at its best, being a parent can be one of the hardest jobs in the world.

But in these extraordinary times, parents are under more pressure than ever as we try to keep the balance through lockdown.

Trying to support our children in their school work, ensure our families stay physically and mentally healthy, stop arguments spiralling out of control, juggle work (if we are lucky enough to have it) and look after our own wellbeing somewhere in the mix can feel overwhelming.

In normal times, Parent Gym’s school-based interactive sessions help build the skills and confidence of parents to create a calm home environment and raise happy children.

With schools closed, Parent Gym are developing a brand-new set of short online modules, offering quick, practical techniques to help create a happier family during these tricky times.

Our e-workouts are free and fun and take only a few minutes to do on your phone, tablet or laptop – perfect for when you are making a cup of tea.

The first module - Keep Talking, looks at ways to get our families communicating.  (We are busy producing more workouts so watch this space!).

Click [https://storefront.themindgym.com/store](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__storefront.themindgym.com_store&d=DwQGaQ&c=euGZstcaTDllvimEN8b7jXrwqOf-v5A_CdpgnVfiiMM&r=YY9DXwWWM9U9o-3A4CNIPUPGq6FIBB8_rK2fzEL9mnw&m=bGA_fU2hL4uFxhHNGDnoH2YDg617tkpt7cVs6YcR8EE&s=kNS_qWaxMCLcCetw4Bk-JNLmAywSSks5ZFNWf0JYxTA&e=)  to head through to the Mind Gym Storefront, pop the Parent Gym Keep Talking module in your shopping basket and ‘purchase’ the eWorkouts (it won’t cost you a thing though…).

Why not also visit Parent Gym’s Facebook group, Parenting through uncertainty <https://www.facebook.com/groups/148481499806766/> to share your experiences of parenting in lockdown and pick up some ideas from other parents for ways to keep our family life calm?

Best wishes