

5th January 2021

Dear Parents / Carers,

I trust that your first day of home learning has gone well. I am writing to inform you of what to expect during the next 6 weeks of lock down.

Where there is a local lockdown requiring pupils to remain at home, The Department for Education expects schools to have the capacity to offer immediate remote education. The expectations for remote learning are as follows:

- Set assignments so that pupils have meaningful and ambitious work each day in a number of different subjects.
- Teach a planned and well-sequenced curriculum so that knowledge and skills are built incrementally, with a good level of clarity about what is intended to be taught and practised in each subject.
- Provide frequent, clear explanations of new content, delivered by a teacher in the school or through high-quality curriculum resources and/or videos.
- Gauge how well pupils are progressing through the curriculum, using questions and other suitable tasks and set a clear expectation on how regularly teachers will check work.
- Enable teachers to adjust the pace or difficulty of what is being taught in response to questions or assessments, including, where necessary, revising material or simplifying explanations to ensure pupils' understanding.
- Plan a programme that is of equivalent length to the core teaching pupils would receive in school, ideally including daily contact with teachers.

The children at The Willows can expect the following provision from school.

What	Details	Where it can be found
A timetable of the week / or 2 weeks	A breakdown of which subjects will be taught on which days	Seesaw / Tapestry
Monday Morning & Friday afternoon Zoom*	Informal live chat with the class on a Monday morning followed by an end of week catch up on the Friday afternoon. These will be timetabled at different times for each Year Group. (Details to follow)	Zoom
Motivational morning video	A motivational recorded message from a member of the year group team. This will involve a rundown of the daily timetable as well as a brief reflection on the previous day.	Seesaw/ Tapestry
Shorter activities	This might be a handwriting sheet, link to online reading books (Bug Club), TTRS etc or a quick challenge.	Uploaded with the daily timetable so all resources are easily accessible in the same place.

Lessons, usually three a day.	A pre-recorded video explanation delivered by a member of the year group team of the learning and learning task, slides, worksheets and links to other relevant websites.	Seesaw/ Tapestry
Feedback from the teacher	All children are expected to post the work they complete onto Seesaw or Tapestry where the teachers will give oral or written feedback.	Seesaw/ Tapestry

*** Safeguarding**

- If possible, at least two members of staff will be present in each meeting.
- By allowing your child to attend the meeting, you are agreeing that at least one parent/carer will be present in the room with your child for the duration of the meeting. You are not expected to be part of the call, although the younger children may need you to facilitate the meeting.

Whilst it would be our preference for all children to be in school all of the time, we feel that the provision we are offering for remote learning is as close to the children being in school as possible. It will still provide children with the knowledge and skills they need to make progress, whilst keeping them engaged and motivated to learn.

The children's homework books and additional work books will be left outside of the school gates in labelled boxes for you to walk and collect (please do not collect between 8.30am and 9.00am or 3.00pm and 3.30pm)

Please do not feel the need to print off every worksheet, children can record their learning directly into their workbooks, takes photos of their work and post on Tapestry or SeeSaw for their teachers to comment on and provide feedback through 'marking'

Live Lessons

Teachers will not be delivering 'Live Lessons'. At The Willows Safeguarding is of the utmost importance and the senior leadership team feel that the Safeguarding of our children will be put at risk if children have to connect to a live lesson from home with potentially up to 45 other children online at the same time.

In addition, we respect the rights of our staff as well as our children and whilst there is a lack of proven effectiveness and appropriateness for primary school aged children to attend live lessons, we will be posting pre-recorded lessons online.

Live lessons mean that both a device and the children have to be available at a specific time of the day, putting additional pressure and expectations on families who are often juggling working from home whilst trying to support their child. When lessons are pre-recorded, children can have a level of independence to choose which order they would like to undertake their learning.

Live lessons require both a device and a greater internet band width that not all families may have access to, creating an inequality of opportunity. For families with more than one child isolating, there would be an even higher demand on the availability of technology at a specific time.

In the classroom, teachers are highly skilled at being responsive to the children's needs. However, this type of interaction is not possible in the same way online. On the other hand, a pre-recorded lesson can be paused, listened to again, allowing children additional time and support if needed to complete a task. Teachers will also be monitoring Tapestry/Seesaw regularly so can offer additional help via that platform should it be needed.

Staff can also post additional videos and resources for individuals in the same way a child would get personalised support and challenge in class. Whereas, due to the nature of online video communications, a live lesson to up to 45 children at once would have a more blanket/ passive approach. Seesaw also allows the teaching staff to give instant personal verbal or written feedback to help guide the children with their learning, help them build on their previous knowledge and keep them motivated to keep learning from home.

Remote learning will not be offered during scheduled school holidays.

Questions and Answers about The Willows' Remote Learning Offer

Why is the provision different for children who are isolating whilst their bubble is still in school?

Whilst a child's bubble is still in school, throughout the day, all teachers will be teaching their classes. The time teachers have to prepare high quality lessons and provide meaningful feedback along with their other duties within the school is finite. Therefore, it will not be possible for teachers to pre-record detailed explanations of the work set in these circumstances.

Is my child expected to do work at home when they are ill?

If your child is ill, they must take the time to rest and recover and are not expected to work from home. However, if a child no longer feels ill, but are still considered contagious (10 days after the onset of COVID-19 symptoms), parents and carers must ring the admin team to let the school know that teachers can begin posting work to their child's Tapestry/ Seesaw account.

What if I don't have access to the internet?

Those families who do not have access to the internet can collect the work from school which will be printed each day and left in the school office. In exceptional circumstances, these resources will be posted to them. Please speak to your child's class teacher if you think you will need this provision.

How will my child with Special Educational Needs be supported?

All children who have identified special educational needs will have additional personalised support and resources posted onto their personal Tapestry or Seesaw account. Teachers will respond to children on an individual basis and therefore plan appropriately to ensure every child is able to achieve.

Will my child receive a phone call from their teacher?

As teachers are able to interact with their pupils through Tapestry and Seesaw, staff will not be making telephone calls to children unless there are pre-arranged or exceptional circumstances. If a whole bubble is closed, two Zoom meetings a week will be held between the class teacher and the whole class.

Why has The Willows chosen to use Tapestry and Seesaw to provide their remote learning?

In Reception and Nursery, we use Tapestry to build a special record of a child's experiences, development and learning journey, linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. Parents are able to view online their child's progress and how much fun they're having, whilst also uploading their own comments and media. As this platform is used on a daily basis in our Early Years teams by both parents, carers and teachers, we feel it would be unnecessary to ask parents to use a different platform that they are not familiar with to access remote learning.

From Year 1 to Year 6, we use Seesaw, which is a platform for student engagement used in over 150 countries that can be used on any device through the Seesaw app or online. One of the most important features of the Seesaw application is its ability to engage student learning by leveraging their digital technology skills. Seesaw is very easy to learn for pupils as young as 5 years old and those without a strong technological background. Using the creative tools, pupils can easily create artefacts such as drawings, photos, videos, notes, etc. or they can add files from their devices.

Seesaw does not require students to have an established e-mail or Google account.

With the built-in audio and video recording features, pupils can easily provide reflections of their work to communicate and collaborate with their teacher.

By using the drawing tools to complete an activity, teachers can lessen the need for printing off worksheets both at home and at school.

I know you all did your best to support your children in the spring and summer lockdown and despite some of you finding it challenging it at times you all did a brilliant job. We hope that additions to our home learning offer will enable the children to do independently, increase their motivation and progress and allow them to feel more connected with their teachers.

Please do not hesitate to email or ring school if you have any queries or concerns. Good luck you will all be fabulous.

Take care,

Mrs Warren