



17<sup>th</sup> April 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope this letter finds you well and that you managed to enjoy the Easter weekend with your families. Term does not officially start until Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April but I have answered some frequently asked questions below which have been kindly provided by Anna White (Co-chair of the POBS).

Yours faithfully,

Charles Beckerson  
HEAD TEACHER

1) If parents are suffering financial difficulty as a direct result of the virus / lockdown do they qualify for free school meals vouchers?

We sent out a letter just before the Easter break with details of how parents can claim free school meals for their children. It has been attached again to this document. On Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April, we will begin processing any applications which we have received so far.

2) How do we best monitor the level the children should be reading at?

We recommend that you focus on reading for enjoyment with your child at this time. Read books with and to your child that they really enjoy. They can be read as often as you like as there is much to gain from reading books more than once.

I have asked Key Stage 1 teachers to sign into Oxford Owl. They can then set up a Class Login page for their class which may enable them to give more focussed direction and support to parents. Once this has been actioned, I will ask teachers to share this information with their class reps.

3) Will teachers expect work to be handed in at the end of this period? Is there any guidance on how parents should present work to teachers when school reopens?

Work should not be handed in at the end of this period. Questions set on the shared drive should also have the answers provided so that parents can mark the work with their children.

If children have been doing some research for their new topics, they can bring this in on the first day back to school and it will be used in a whole-class sharing session.

4) Will any work be marked?

See above.

5) What is the strategy to manage the huge transition from year 2 to 3 if school does not reopen until September? Will there be some support during the summer holidays if restrictions have been lifted?

At this stage, we do not know when we will return to school. If it is not before September, we will ensure we produce transition packs for children. Currently, there are no plans for the school to be open during the summer holidays.

6) My child does not always understand Maths sessions on White Rose. Is there was a way of getting further input, such as via Zoom sessions with teachers? This question was asked in reverse too - my child is finding maths too easy. Is there any way of getting more targeted work?

Please find attached a link to our school's progression in calculations document which should help you and your child with any maths questions set.

In addition to this, Mr Avenell has been producing a series of maths videos to accompany the progression in calculations document. They can be viewed here:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC9yjdKAWmI3-KcVYLZYEQUA>

It is not possible for us to set more targeted work than we have already put in place.

7) I cannot manage my job and teach my children. Is there going to be any extra support from school? Is it possible to have teach-in sessions / videos from teachers?

We are ensuring that the answers to questions (English and maths) are provided so they can be marked at home. We are unable to support parents to manage their own work in addition to their children's work. Don't worry if you are struggling to manage your own workload whilst trying to home school - just do what you can and focus on reading, spellings, number bonds and times tables if you are struggling.

Starting on week beginning Monday 20th April, teachers will be making a weekly phone call to the parents/carers of each child in their class.

8) Would it be possible to give the tasks on Purple Mash open ended deadlines so that they could be accessed at any point?

Yes. I will ask staff not put assign hand-in dates to these tasks.

9) Please could we see a syllabus so that they knew more broadly what the children were working towards?

This information is available. On the shared drive, look at the folder called 'Other curriculum resources'. In this folder you will find knowledge organisers for every subject and a separate folder called 'English Home Learning'

10) Online teaching? Can we understand further the reasons why aren't St Barts doing it? Cameras can be turned off if there is a safeguarding issue. Safeguarding concern over school videos being shared on YouTube when it is a 17y+ platform?

This was asked several times, here's another example: Many schools across the country seem to be doing online lessons. Why isn't St Barts following suit? The kids can tune in and watch their teacher talk? It will take some of the pressure off the parents but more importantly the teacher can explain the right way to learn.

And another: Has the school looked at google classroom or an alternative virtual lesson?

The school has decided not to take online teaching any further. There are various reasons for this. Three key reasons are: We do not believe it is age appropriate for our pupils, we cannot guarantee that children or staff will be safeguarded and we are unable to provide the comprehensive training required for our staff. Please re-read the letter\* at the foot of this document which was written to parents and carers from the local authority just before Easter.

11) Spelling: What is the best way of helping my child with spellings? Are there any teaching tactics to get spellings to stick?

We recommend continuing to use the spelling strategies which have always been encouraged:

LSCWC - Look, Say, Cover, Write, Check

Mnemonics - e.g. Because - Big elephants can always understand small elephants

Rhyme

Creating a picture to help to with 'fixing' the word to memory

Dictation

12) Formatting: The English work for Princess and the Pea for this week .....it has been cut and pasted into a powerpoint and the original formatting has been left in place which made it very hard to read. (There is an offer from a parent to help tidy up formatting if needed in future).

Teachers are doing their best with the resources they have at home. They are also managing their own families at this time. If parents would like to reformat work which is sent out then that would be very kind and they can then share it with others via their parent reps.

13) English - Each day seems to have been a piece of writing would it be possible to mix it up a bit and provide some more straightforward SPAG / comprehensions so that every task is not about creating something from scratch?

As mentioned before Easter, there will be a balance between reading comprehensions, writing tasks and SPAG from now on.

14) What is the school's approach is to 'falling behind' - there is a lot of concern about this from parents on Whats App groups, that if the children don't keep up with the work being set they may be 'behind' when they return to school. Given that kids might return to school in a new year group in September, has the school had any thoughts on what the approach might be?

Teachers will assess the children when they come back to school and plan lessons according to need.

15) Is there a way to encourage feedback from teacher on Purple Mash as makes the kids feel much better?

We have turned this feature off. However, Purple Mash does provide instant feedback to children as they work through many of the activities.

16) There are rumours that Y6 will never go back to school. What is the contingency plan? Will there be a send-off?

At this stage, we do not know when the school will re-open. However, if it is not before September, we will ensure we organise a special event for the Year 6 children to enable them to say goodbye and have a meaningful leavers service and party.

17) What is the strategy to help children who are behind but not on the SEND register and need extra support?

Teachers will assess children when they return to school. In the meantime, children should be encouraged to do the best they can with the work which is provided.