

No 1 Multi Academy Trust for disadvantaged pupils' outcomes
DFE PERFORMANCE TABLES 2019 AND NO 3 IN 2018

Top 10 National Pupil Progress
DFE PERFORMANCE TABLES 2018 AND 2019



Tuesday 12th January 2021

Dear Families

I hope that this letter continues to find you and your families safe and healthy during this pandemic. I know some of you will sigh at yet another update from me but in these ever changing times, it is important that I share with you new guidance and changes in a timely manner. Information is key for both families who are accessing the remote learning package at home and those using Educare.

Google Classroom and Live Hangouts

A huge well done to all of you who have managed to successfully navigate the Google Classroom and Tapestry platforms! Engagement with both the learning and the live sessions with the teachers has been really high. There are still a few glitches but thank you for your patience whilst staff resolve these with you.

Some parents have asked why we are not doing live lessons. We have a number of reasons for not choosing to do this, including:

- Research does not indicate that live lessons are best.
- Not all children have access to their own device. We have many families sharing a device amongst several siblings or who are sharing a device they are using to work from home. Live lessons would exclude many children from learning.
- Not doing live lessons gives more flexibility to those parents who are working from home trying to juggle their own work and supporting their children

We have taken onboard your feedback about the children wanting to see their teachers and friends and the daily hangouts are going to be key as we move forwards.

Expectations

Many of you will have seen in the news that the Government set new guidance on what schools MUST provide for KS1 and KS2 children last week. This is 3 hours for KS1 and 4 for KS2; for children in the EYFS, there is no minimum amount of work that must be set each day due to the different nature of their curriculum.

In line with policy, the teachers are setting the amount of work set out above, as they must, based on what they would cover within this time at school. However, we do fully appreciate that it is taking longer for some children to complete this at home. This is absolutely okay! The children are living through a pandemic and remote learning through Google Classroom everyday is new to them as well as you as parents. Please be kind to yourselves about this. Teachers are going to start to put guidance times on activities to help you, please stick to them as a maximum amount of time to spend on an activity. Also, as a general rule, spend the mornings on Maths and English/RWInc and use the



All Saints' Thurlestone C of E Academy
Thurlestone,
Devon, TQ7 3NB
T: 01548 560494 **E:** thurlestone@lapsw.org
W: thurlestone-lap.co.uk



TOGETHER WE EMPOWER EXCELLENCE



afternoons for the foundation subjects such as History, Geography and Art. We are not expecting children to catch up in the evenings or at the weekend.

The teachers are already using their assessment skills to hone the learning for the children in their classes, just like they would during a normal school day. They are working with children who may be finding things difficult, assigning a little more practice of a skill if needed, maybe setting different work for some children or leading some small group sessions for those children who need it.

Safeguarding

Even though children are being remotely educated whilst at home, we still have a safeguarding responsibility for all of them. If any child is not present for a daily 'hangout' and the teacher has not had contact to explain the absence, then they will follow up absence with a telephone call and email. If they still do not receive a reason for the absence, then our safeguarding policy will start with a home visit from members of staff and if still no contact is made then the police will be informed and may make a welfare call.

We absolutely understand that sometimes it may not be possible for your child to join the hangout, however we ask that you maintain good communication with us in these circumstances.

Absence

If your child is unwell and unable to engage in remote learning, please contact the school office in the usual manner, either by telephone or email to let us know not to expect to see them in their class hangout that day.

Educare Places - New Guidance

New, updated guidance was received from the Government last week. It clearly states that '**parents and carers who are critical workers should keep their children at home if they can**'. A place at school should only be taken if there are no other options available as we should all be looking to reduce the number of contacts which we have. Please consider whether Educare spaces are truly required or whether there is a parent at home who could look after the child. We appreciate that remote learning is tricky to manage whilst working at home but your child would be much safer at home than in school.

Friday Afternoons

Following the new guidance, we will now remain open for Educare on a Friday afternoon. However, our teachers still need time for their statutory PPA (planning and preparation time), therefore teachers will not be available to answer emails or queries after 12pm on a Friday. Our wonderful support staff will continue to support the Educare children.

Mental Health and Well being



There are lots of new situations and emotions that children may be experiencing during the lockdown. There may be more conflict at home, increased levels of loneliness and isolation, or even difficulty sleeping. Here are some practical activities to support children and families with the different effects the lockdown may be having on them.

<https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/media/2035/coronavirus-dealing-with-effects-toolkit-5.pdf>

Brain breaks –Children may find completing school work at home difficult and have trouble focusing. Parents can try out some of these brain break activities with their children to break up a period of concentration.

<https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/media/2028/brain-breaks.pdf>

Internet Safety

At this time children are necessarily using the internet to support their remote learning. Below is a useful website with advice on children using the internet safely.

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers>



Standard Assessment Tests (SATs)

You may have heard in the media this week that the Education secretary Gavin Williamson has announced that the SATs tests this year have been cancelled. If you have any questions about this or you would like to discuss this then please contact me at school.

Best Wishes

L. Garside

Miss L Garside
Executive Head