



Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we are getting to the middle of Week 2 I wanted to write and thank you for all you have done in the last week supporting your children at home. Despite being an incredibly challenging time the positivity and determination to get on has shone through in all the messages and phone calls we have had.

As we are all aware, over the last week everyone across the country has had to face up to the reality of the situation and the impact it is having and will have, on how we live will for some time to come. We are all facing a period of change and uncertainty - something none of us like but we also realise that the new measures in place are putting huge extra stress onto you as parents.

As a school we will do everything we can to help and support you through this time. However I also want to stress that it is really important that you do not worry yourselves everyday about school work and how much your children are doing!

Please remember the most important thing for you is to look after your own health and wellbeing and your family and especially your children.

A few weeks ago when there was mention schools might close, none of us dreamt that it would happen. Well it has and we are in 'Lockdown'. As a result and very suddenly, you are being asked to keep your children at home and do some 'home learning'! This is new for all of us and we are all finding our way with it. We are simply responding in the best way we can to this situation we have all found ourselves in.

We have set work that we hope can help occupy your children and give them something meaningful to do while taking their minds off what must be an incredibly anxious and confusing time. We know so many of our pupils like routine so having a range of subjects and activities can be used to help provide a focus for part of the day and a semblance of normality with opportunities for contact with staff. However we also know that for some doing work at home is not what they want or expect to do!

I want you to know that how much they do and when they do it has to be for you to decide. We are only trying to help promote learning where we can and we know that the majority of children learn best in a 'proper' school environment. The current condition is far from ideal in terms of enabling learning.

You are their parents and not their teachers and no one expects you to be able to do both. If it's working for you that's great and I know there has been some amazing work completed over the last week. But this is going to be a marathon not a sprint and I believe it will be some time before we are all back in school.

So please don't worry about amount of work completed. When it's tough feel free to forget the school stuff and focus on just being their parent.

That said if your child is in Key Stage 4 or 5 we do need to be encouraging them to do what they can, when they can. Some will be sitting some examinations next year and all will be doing a range of accreditations so this is a time they can be gently working through what is set for them.

For those expecting to complete accreditations this year we are still waiting for advice from the examination boards and would advise these pupils and students to complete the work that staff are setting for them.

We are approaching the Easter holidays and we feel it is really important that this is a break for staff and children.

Therefore teachers will not be setting any more work until Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2020. However we will provide some Easter activities that you might like to do to help occupy the time and of course if pupils want to do any of the work set it will still be there but it is not expected!

I know you have all been using Seesaw, Dojo and email to keep in touch with staff and discuss and share work. However during the Easter break please do not use these methods of communication with tutor teams.

We do of course want to keep in touch and support as much as we can. Staff will continue to check in with you weekly by phone. However if you need anything specific during this time or you feel you need additional help and support please email me directly. I will be checking my emails several times a day. My email address is [head@aldermanknight.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:head@aldermanknight.gloucs.sch.uk). Please include in your email the best telephone number to contact you on.

In addition, on Friday, we will post on the website a list of Easter activities, Online events and websites that you may find helpful to use with your children over the holiday period.

Finally, I would just like to say a huge thank you for everything you are doing to support us and your children. We appreciate that many of you are also working from home and juggling school work, looking after your children and your own work commitments is really hard work.

All any of us can do is our best in our own circumstances and it's important we remember that what really matters is that we all support each other and we are kind to each other. We are all in this together and together we will get through it.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Clare Steel". The letter 'C' is large and loops around the 'l', and the 'S' is also large and loops around the 't'.

Clare Steel