



St Ives Infant School

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8th January 2020

Dear parents and carers,

I apologise for all the recent communication and appreciate the patience, and support, you have shown this week.

I would like to start by saying I share your frustration with the lateness of statements, the changing guidance from the government and the lack of detail in the media statements. I fully appreciate that it is causing a lot of added anxieties and confusion for people at this already challenging time. Further guidance came out yesterday afternoon which addresses some of the unanswered questions from the initial announcement so we have something further to work with.

I thought it may be useful to answer and address some common questions that are being raised as well as offer additional information about some aspects of school now that Lockdown 3 has started. Each lockdown has been slightly different and this one is no different.

What can I expect from remote learning?

- Class teacher contactable through Google classroom for general work inquiries
- Class teacher contactable via email for any specific or individual concerns.
- Office contactable to organise paper work packs
- The guidance for learning is an average of 3 hours per day for primary children across the cohort, with less for younger children. This will include one English (reading or writing), Maths and Phonics video daily, a PE activity and additional videos will be available for the wider curriculum. This differs slightly, depending on the age of the child but there are daily videos to ensure visual contact along with a suggested daily timetable
- Feedback will be provided at least weekly, so please ensure you are sharing work with the class teacher. Home learning packs could be returned when you collect the next weeks.
- Phone call at least once a week with parents/carers
- Google Meet up for the whole class once a week (please see additional guidance on how to access). Timings for these will differ and teachers will advise you of these
- Paper packs are available from the office – please give us prior notice of your request. We are a Green Charter school so we do not want to print work unnecessarily, thank you for supporting us with this.

We are continually reviewing our offer of remote learning and will provide updated information which we will share with you directly and on our website shortly. As mentioned, this lockdown is slightly different and the expectation is that all children are engaged in some learning daily.

Please remember for our age children the biggest part of our role is the relationships, scaffolding and support we offer face to face. This cannot be replicated in the same way in a paper pack or online.

Online access is also not essential, if you can access the videos that will assist but the paper pack offers the same work.

I cannot stress enough that I fully appreciate that everyone's circumstances are very different and this can vary day to day. Be kind to yourselves about what is achievable, don't worry if you are not doing every element, every day.

Some people would like further work and I would suggest the following;

- Reading - daily for pleasure, as well as in terms of developing their reading skills.
- Spellings/Phonics for a year group
- Access the Oak National Academy - which has specific lessons for all subject areas and year groups available.


[Oak National Academy Online Classroom \(thenational.academy\)](https://www.thenational.academy)

- Refer to the suggested website list from the first lockdown (accessible on the website)

How has this been decided?

- Guidance documents from the government
- Reflection on the survey you completed in Autumn 1 about prior remote learning experiences.
- Discussions with our staff and other schools
- Consideration that teachers are still providing face to face teaching for some pupils, making calls home regularly, planning and assessing work, replying to email inquiries from parents and undertaking their wider school duties.

Google

- Each class teacher will meet with their class weekly as we know how important that physical contact is to their children. We ask that everyone has read the guidance attached to ensure this is a safe place for the children to meet. (Guidance for accessing is attached)
- To download videos which appear to be loading (continual loading image) you click, on the top right-hand corner () and you will then be able to open it.
- Google classroom can also be accessed by Xbox & Playstation consoles. Further information can be found at the end of this letter.

Communication

- Facebook Page – this is a platform for celebration and providing news and information about our school, it is not a platform for discussion and queries. If you have a question, concern or complaint then please do contact the school via email

or by telephone. The school reserves the right to remove any potentially abusive, litigious, unsuitable comments. Facebook is not continually monitored and so if an urgent response is needed please email or phone the school.

- **Google Classroom** – As this is also a public forum it is for general inquiries/comments about work set, difficulties opening file etc.
- **Email** – Please email if you have a specific or personal comment to make. Any concerns regarding remote learning should be sent via email to allow us to respond appropriately.
- **Phone** – If your query is urgent or you need to advise of something urgently please do so by phone. The school office is open as usual.
- **Response times** - Teachers, when not working face to face teaching, will ensure any queries received before 4pm are addressed as soon as possible. Please note inquiries after this time will not be picked up until at least the next day. If a general inquiry regarding work please contact both year group teachers to ensure a prompt response.
- We have purchased a programme which now allows us to email all parents to improve our communication links

Can we politely ask that you make contact with one member of staff using one of the above at any one time. If you feel you have not heard back in an appropriate time period please do recontact us. The reason for this request is due to the sheer volume of duplicated or repeated communications and the time this takes away from all staff members, often away from supporting remote learning. Please remember teachers may be teaching at the time you contact so their reply may be much later in the day.

Organisation

- **FSM** – boxes will be available for collection every Monday afternoon. The office staff will be in touch regarding timings for this. Please ensure you advise us asap if you do not require your box. This is to ensure no food goes to waste as the packs are made up ready for the set collection times.
- **Paper packs** – Please request a paper pack from the office by 10.30am Monday morning. The packs can then be prepared and ready for collection Monday afternoon only, unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- **Isolation** – Where a family is in isolation, we will deliver paper packs and food parcels to your address. If you have difficulty for any other reason collecting from school please phone the office to discuss this further.

Laptops and data

- We applied some time ago to the government scheme for laptops to support our most vulnerable children. The response was an allocation of 0 laptops. I understand that we will have the opportunity to apply again shortly.
- **Data** – There is the opportunity for us to apply on parent's behalf to increase data allowances. The link below gives further information. This again is for children who the government class as vulnerable.

Nursery

There is now further guidance regarding the expectations of schools in relation to opening nurseries. I will be contacting our nursery parents separately to explain this.

It is my aim to keep you as informed as possible, and again I apologise for the length of this communication but I also wanted to reflect some of the frequently asked questions this week. Talking to colleagues in other schools, there have been the usual ups and downs we all expected from another lockdown. This is not because any of us were unprepared, it is simply that we are always evaluating and reflecting what we do and trying to improve it.

Every single member of staff is working exceptionally hard to ensure the very best provision and support for all of our school community.

Please do get in touch if you wish to bring anything to our attention.

Thank you for your continued support.



Mrs Leisa Farrar

Headteacher

Access to Google Classroom via Xbox & Playstation

If parents do not have a spare device or laptop for Home Learning but have an Xbox and/or PlayStation they can use them to access Google Classroom!

Google Classroom can be opened on Xbox and PlayStation. There isn't an app that the students can add to their consoles. Instead, they are going to have to use the built-in browsers that come on the two devices.

On Xbox, it is Microsoft Edge.

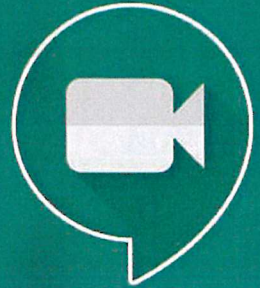
On PlayStation, it is the "www" browser.

Your children will probably know how to find the browsers on their consoles, but if not, each one has a search function they can access on the home screen.

Once the browser has been opened:

- Type in classroom.google.com in the URL bar. A prompt for a Google account will appear. Type in your login details from school. The Classroom home screen will open up.
- If you have a keyboard then you can plug it in, you will have a much easier time navigating. Otherwise, use the controller to click on the classroom tiles, open up assignments and type.

Google Meet Top Tips



**Meet is Google's video-call app.
Please use the tips below to use it safely
and successfully with your teacher.**

1. Get permission

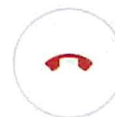
Make sure your parent/carer knows that you are about to join a video call with your teacher and classmates and that they are happy for you to do so.

2. Mute your microphone

With lots of people on the call together, it can get very noisy and confusing, so mute your mic at the start and raise your hand if you want to talk. The teacher will then let you unmute.



**Mute/
Unmute**



**End
call**



**Camera
on /off**

3. Check your surroundings

It's best to find a quiet area of your house, so you can hear what your teacher is saying. Also dress appropriately (no PJs!) and check that the area behind you contains no personal photos or information that others will be able to see on your camera.

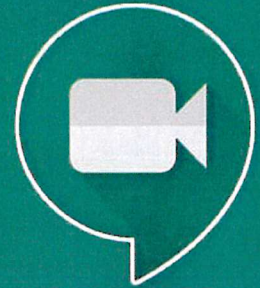
4. Change the view

By default, you will see a large image of the person who currently is talking. If you want to see everyone together, click the 3 dots button in the bottom right corner, select 'Change Layout' and choose the 'Tiled' option.

Top Tips Continued



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5. Best behaviour

You should behave as you do in school and use appropriate language.

6. Private link

Please do not share the Google Meet link with anyone else. The teacher will share the link with a group of pupils.

7. Speak clearly

If you do want to ask the teacher a question, please speak loudly and clearly so that everyone in the video call can hear you. Remember to raise your hand first and the teacher will ask you to unmute your microphone.

8. Be patient

Everyone in the call will have different internet speeds so there may be some lag/delay when someone is speaking. Be patient and we can ask them to repeat their question if they can not be heard clearly enough.