



Barrow Hills

SCHOOL

Friday 10th April

Dear Parents,

I am writing to update you on our plans for distance learning for next term. We have spent time over the past two weeks reflecting on our approach in the final week of the Spring Term. We have taken on board feedback from you as parents, as well as from children and staff about the successful elements, and considered how we can adjust to work out the kinks that we experienced too. In this letter I will be outlining what you can expect from school over the coming weeks until we are able to return to the school campus.

Adjustments to the timetable

We are maintaining our spread of subjects across the curriculum and will be keeping to the normal timings of the school day. However we are aware that, due to individual family circumstances, this was a little overwhelming for some families in the final week of term. We are very happy for you to scale back on which lessons or tasks you access in order to make distance learning work for your family. In the first instance, we would suggest that you maintain a focus on English and maths in the mornings, along with some reading aloud to an adult, and dip into the other subjects as and when it works for you. Please do get in touch with your child's form tutor if you would like help in adjusting the timetable.

In response to feedback and in order to help us to deliver our distance learning package as well as possible, we have made a few adjustments to when particular lessons happen within the day or week. Updated timetables for Years 3 and 4 will be sent out next week.

How we will communicate work

All learning for children in Junior Prep will now be set using Tapestry. Tapestry allows teachers to upload lessons with documents and videos, and offers a very user-friendly interface for you or your child to share their learning with their



teacher. If your child has been through the EYFS at Barrow Hills, you may well be familiar with this platform, and we have been impressed with how Tapestry have adapted their platform to aid schools in delivering distance learning at this time.

You should have received an email inviting you to activate your account at the end of last term. Please do follow the instructions in this email if you have not yet done so. Parent guides are available for website browser, iOS app and android app here: <https://eyfs.info/files/category/82-parents/>. If you did not receive the email, or are having problems accessing tapestry, please get in touch with itsupport@barrowhills.org.

Work will be set by each subject teacher on Tapestry and will be available the evening before the scheduled lesson.

What kind of things to expect

You can expect a range of different learning tasks, and these will vary from subject to subject and lesson to lesson. There is likely to be a mixture of more 'formal' written work, as well as practical tasks to complete. Teachers may direct you to websites which can be accessed either for research or to practise skills, and they may also share videos to watch. This is not an exhaustive list! Teachers may also share resources which need to be printed.

It may take a little time to get the balance right with the amount of work set. While some work may be set that encourages children to manage their time to complete a task in the given time-frame, some tasks may be open-ended or designed so that the faster workers might complete them in the lesson time but other children would not be expected to. Please don't feel an obligation to 'finish' things if they are taking longer than the normal lesson time. Equally, you may find that learning 1:1 at home can be more 'intense' than learning in the classroom, and so you may get more done in a shorter time than a child would at school. However, this may also mean that they have worked significantly harder and may need a break!

Handing in work and receiving feedback

Your child's teachers are keen to see what they have been up to at home, and Tapestry allows you to upload photos and videos so that you can share your child's learning with their teacher.

Your child's teacher can then comment on what you have uploaded in order to give your child feedback on their learning. Where work is uploaded during or shortly after the timetabled lesson time, teachers will aim to give feedback in time for the following lesson in that subject.

Pastoral Contact and Assemblies

You will be receiving a 'who to contact if' guide for both parents and children which will help you to know who to direct particular queries to, and please do continue to keep in contact with your child's form tutor via email about any pastoral concerns.

We are looking into ways of continuing to celebrate children's successes in our weekly assemblies on a Monday and Friday. These will be delivered by a member of the senior management team and a roster of staff.

Staffing in Year 3

Mrs Eleanor Holmes was due to join us as a Year 3 teacher this term while Mrs Miles takes up her role as Head of Pre-Prep. We have thought long and hard about what is in the best interests of our children and, while we still look forward to welcoming Mrs Holmes as a form tutor if we return to school, we have decided to adjust our plans for the time being. We are keen to ensure as smooth a transition to distance learning as possible, and we feel that it would be too disruptive to ask the children to adjust not only to distance learning, but also to a brand new person being their key member of staff.

As such, Mrs Peek will be taking responsibility for Year 3 as a whole year group for the coming weeks while we deliver the curriculum from a distance. She will act as form tutor to all children in Year 3, and will also take over the teaching of Maths and English to both groups. We feel that with her detailed knowledge of the children, given that she already teaches both classes for certain subjects, she is in the best possible position to guide them through this time. Some of the teaching of non-core subjects will be taken on by other Barrow Hills staff to support Mrs Peek. Please refer to the timetable that you will receive next week for details.

Your child's teachers are currently hard at work adjusting their normal planning and approach to ensure the best possible outcomes for your child during this time and I hope that this letter has been useful in giving you an update on our planned approach. We are looking forward to welcoming your child back to the school campus as soon as we are able to.

Kind regards,



Rachel Harris
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