



Belmont Primary School Newsletter January 15th 2021



Dear Parents / Carers,

Welcome to the weekend (nearly!).

Contact

It has been fantastic to have spoken to so many of you this week, whether it was myself or one of the teachers. It is really important that we try to maintain channels of communication with those of you whose children are working from home. If we have not managed to speak with you, be assured we have tried and will do so again next week. I do hope you managed to join the live story also (my screen certainly suggested that for each of the four sessions, there were a number of 'attendees!'). Next week's joining instructions will be sent through Freeflow so do keep an eye out.

Microsoft Teams

I have to say, the staff have been working relentlessly to learn how to get the best from this platform and we will be starting to use this from Monday to set and 'mark' work. As I am sure you will be aware, the focus for schools has changed enormously since March and there is the expectation that children spend a minimum of three hours per day on school work (in Key Stage Two it is actually four hours). That is the theory. I am also aware of the reality and the challenges this brings and also tasks can take longer for some children than others. We do have to monitor the engagement of the children and during our weekly calls, will of course be discussing this with you as well as keeping record of how each child is engaging. One issue which is likely to arise is having more than one child needing to access the technology. One possible solution to this is for children to complete work on paper (as opposed to electronically) and 'photograph' it to upload, similar to how it would have been done on Freeflow.

For staff, the major advantage is that children's work will be returned to their folder, unlike in Freeflow where it all lands into one area making it hard to keep a track of what has and has not been handed in (or 'turned in' as Teams likes to phrase it!).

Activities at Home

We are well aware of what a busy and creative bunch you all are! If you are engaging in other things at home (I know we have many fantastic cooks and artists as well as a multitude of other talents), then do keep us posted as we love to see things you do which are not purely academic.

As always, please do let us know of any specific struggles or challenges you are having and for those who have done just that this week, I do hope that things have improved. Like any change, it can take a few days to develop a new routine but once it is embedded, it does get easier (from experience!).

If you are emailing to request places or confirm dates for your child/children to attend school, please remember to include your child's name and year group.

As always, enormous thanks to you all for your messages of support which I know have meant a great deal to all the staff and I hope that you are able to have an enjoyable weekend. Take care and look after yourselves.

Yours Sincerely

Mr C Gibson

Staff in School

I would like to thank all of our staff for adapting so quickly to the changing situation despite the fact we do have a number of staff unable to attend school for various reasons. As well as the teachers who are both teaching face to face as well as setting remote tasks, our support staff have also been busy with numerous tasks, not least printing and delivering approximately 300 work packs across the area as well as organising numbers of children attending school through Monday night and beyond. A real team effort as always.

And Finally...

Apologies for all of the information being thrown at you in this communication. The overriding message I want to share is for you all to take care of yourselves and, above all, if there are any concerns, please do contact us. We do not want anybody feeling anxious or concerned about issues school related. We are here to help as far as we possibly can.

I hope the weather picks up to allow you to get outside for a bit over the weekend (within the guidelines, of course!).

With our very best wishes as always,

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "C. Gibson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small dot above the 'i' in Gibson.

Mr C Gibson