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Dear Parents and Carers

We have come to the end of two weeks since the school closed to most children. The school has continued to be open for the children of our Critical Workers and this has varied between ten and twenty children each day.

For the rest of you, life must have changed overnight! I have been thinking of you all in terms of how this crisis may have affected your households, from working at home to losing your job completely. This can't be easy.

I hope by now you will have heard from your child's class teacher. This call is to see how you all are as much as it is to talk about learning. Please do not feel bad if you have done nothing when the teacher calls. He / she just wants to have a chat, preferably with your child too, to let you know that they are there if you need anything or just feel like talking.

Here are some guidelines to help you through the forthcoming weeks. Please remember:

Be realistic about what you can do

- **You're not expected to become teachers** and your children aren't expected to learn as they do in school. Simply **providing your children with some structure** at home will help them to adapt. Use the tips below to help you make this work for your household
- **Experiment** in the first few weeks, and then **take stock**. What's working and what isn't? Ask your children, involve them too
- **Share the load if there are 2 parents at home**. Split the day into 2-3 hour slots and take turns so you can do your own work
- **Take care of your own health and wellbeing**. This will be new for your entire household, so give it time to settle. Take a look at the links below for some advice on mental health and wellbeing
See guidance on supporting your mental health and that of your children:
[Coronavirus and your wellbeing](#) – Mind.org
[Supporting young people's mental health during this period](#) – Anna Freud Centre

Keep to a timetable wherever possible

- **Create and stick to a routine** if you can. This is what children are used to. For example, eat breakfast at the same time and make sure they're dressed before starting the 'school' day.
- **Try to do a little of each thing each day** instead of long period on one subject eg half an hour on English each day instead of all of one morning on English.
- **Involve your children in setting the timetable** where possible. It's a great opportunity for them to manage their own time better and it'll give them ownership
- **Check in with your children and try to keep to the timetable, but be flexible**. If a task/activity is going well or they want more time, let it extend where possible
- If you have more than one child at home, **consider combining their timetables**. For example, they might exercise and do maths together – see what works for your household
- **Designate a working space if possible**, and at the end of the day have a clear cut-off to signal school time is over

- **Stick the timetable up on the wall** so everyone knows what they should be doing when, and tick activities off throughout the day
- **Distinguish between weekdays and weekends**, to separate school life and home life

Make time for exercise and breaks throughout the day

- **Start each morning with a [PE lesson](#)** at 9am with Joe Wicks
- If you have a **garden, use it regularly**. If you don't, try to get out **once a day** as permitted by the government (households can be together outdoors but 2 metres apart from others)
- Get your children to **write in a diary what they did each day** – this can be a clear sign that the school day has ended.

Other activities to keep children engaged throughout the day

- Where you have more freedom in the timetable, **make time for other activities**. Add some creative time or watch a dance video from [Go Noodle](#) to get the heart-rate going
- Get your children to **write postcards** to their grandparents or to pen pals
- Ask **grandparents to listen to your children read** on FaceTime (or ask grandparents to read to younger children)
- **Give them chores** to do so they feel more responsible about the daily routine at home
- Ask them to **help you cook** and bake
- Accept that **they'll probably watch more TV/spend time on their phone** – that's ok but you might want to set/agree some screen time limits

Remember : do what is right for you and your family's wellbeing. Everyone is different and all families have different pressures on their time and energies. The most important thing is to keep safe and take care by following all the guidelines about handwashing and social distancing.

If you need to contact the school

Please email us on: office@oldburypark.worcs.sch.uk and we will reply or we will ask your child's teacher to reply to you if it's a question about their learning.

Many thanks

Sarah Boyce

Sarah Boyce
Principal