



## West Bretton Junior & Infant School Newsletter

14.01.21

Well, on top of Lockdown number 3, 'Live' lessons, Covid risk assessments, teaching children in school at the same time as teaching children online, looking out for Covid symptoms and sending people for tests, we now have snow!!! Lots of it!! The sad thing is that, now we are all online, a snow day has just become a thing of the past! Hence Mrs Womersley's special snow curriculum this afternoon.

School had to close today as the weather has become treacherous and roads are impassable. I normally make this call before 7am, however, at that time, the school was still open and staff were preparing to come. Around 7.30am though, the snow started to fall and stick. As a Head, it is your decision to close so you frantically look at every weather forecast going and make a judgement from that. The snow was set to fall heavy all day, so I made the judgement to close. I am so pleased that I did, as cars and lorries are going everywhere in West Bretton at the moment and it is completely unsafe to travel! As a school, we then have to spend time reporting this decision to parents and the LA.

As we had got live lessons planned anyway, we then held a staff Teams meeting to see if we could continue to deliver them live from home. Internet connections had to be tested and we had to ensure that we had all the resources etc, therefore we were unable to confirm that we could do 'Live' lessons until all this had been checked. Some teaching assistants also had to set up Teams on their systems at home. We do appreciate that you are at home waiting to find out, but please bear with us – we will always let you know as soon as we are able to ourselves. We hadn't forgotten you!

The lessons that were planned for the morning have taken place and work is on Dojos for FS children. However, in the afternoon, I have recommended a snow curriculum – sledging, snowball fights, snow angels and who can make the biggest snowman. Please send pictures to Dojos.

The snow is meant to fall heavy all day, followed by freezing temperatures tonight and tomorrow. As long as the roads are passable tomorrow, then we will be open. If they are not, I will hopefully send a message via Teachers2Parents by 7.30am so please check before you set off. If school is shut, there will be live lessons for year 2s and KS2 children all morning. Mrs Bickerdike's group don't have RWInc on a Friday, therefore this will not take place, so FS and Year 1 will have their RWInc sound videos etc. I am writing a letter to all year 1 parents about RWInc which you should receive either today or tomorrow. Please check your ParentPay. Maths for KS1 will also take place. It is highly likely that there will be no lessons online in the afternoon as many of the teachers' resources for these lessons are at school. Foundation Stage will need to check Dojos please.

If school is open tomorrow, please can children wear warm clothing – uniform tops or PE tops with vests, but trousers on the bottom half. These can be jogging bottoms/ leggings/jeans etc. Please can they also wear suitable snow shoes and bring their school shoes in a bag. Children will be playing in the snow so they will need hat, gloves, scarf and spare trousers and socks. Thank you.

## Online Learning

Thank you to all parents for very quickly setting your child up on online learning this morning if they usually come to school. If you weren't able to set them up, it would be a good idea to try just in case there is another day when school isn't open.

I have been monitoring 'Live' lessons this week so that I can feedback to staff and time has been spent with staff where they shared good ideas, what has worked and hasn't worked etc. We are all on a steep learning curve together. I am very proud of what we have all achieved in such a short time. I know many schools aren't doing 'Live' lessons and one of the main reasons for this is that it is hard to teach children online and in the classroom at the same time. It also causes lots of extra work. However, my staff have taken it on board and the engagement with the children has been fabulous to see. Thank you so much for the positive comments that you have given about them. I do feel that we are teaching the children at home this time and that this is beneficial. Your child though is not expected to do everything independently, some will need support as they would have received extra support in the classroom.

As I have watched many lessons this week, we have set up a set of expectations for children who are online at home. Please can you ensure that they are following these and, if needed, go through them with your child:

1. Children will now enter Teams through the Lobby. This means that children can't randomly come on screen when staff are not ready to start the lesson. If your child is waiting in the lobby, please be patient. It may be that the lesson has to start a few minutes late as they are dealing with something that has happened in the classroom.
2. Children in KS2 and, when told, in KS1 are expected to turn their video off whilst doing their work so that they don't distract others. If your child is in FS, it is good to see them do Dough Disco as we can provide immediate feedback, so please can you turn your video on if you have one.
3. Children should only be using the chat function to answer questions about the lesson, not as a chat device. Staff have to monitor this chat for safeguarding purposes at the end of each day. Please can parents of KS2 children ask their children not to randomly chat and can they also monitor what their child writes and reinforce this rule.
4. Children should not use the emoji tool. We have turned this off, however sometimes this doesn't seem to work.
5. If your child is on a 'Live' lesson at home, they do need to be sat at a table so that they can write and they do need to be dressed appropriately – pjs/ onesies etc does not give a good impression to the children at school and also does not make your child realise that this is school – it is just being done at home!

The Top Tip that I can give you is that if you go through the Teams App rather than continue on the browser, you get a much better view of the teacher doing the lesson and can see the PowerPoints and whiteboards etc rather than a black screen. School has purchased 3 new cameras which we will set up next week and hopefully, this will also help the view of the Teacher.

## Uploading Work

**Please can you only upload work that the Teacher has requested** and save all the rest in a file/ book to bring into school when Lockdown is over. Individual teachers will decide which work needs to be returned and this should be returned on Dojo. The reason for this is that staff are being completely overloaded with work every day. They can teach all day, prepare and set up for the next day's lessons and then have to deal with over 100 pieces of work that have been uploaded daily alongside everyone's

messages. This is becoming impossible to work with and staff are working over 14 hours a day and they have their own families at home. With this in mind could you do the following please:

1. Upload only what the teacher has asked for. FS only want back one activity a day – you choose. Please put all the rest in a file though as they will be needed as evidence. RWInc will only need the long writing back each week, not the daily sentences.
2. If you can upload the maths sheets from KS1 upwards with 2 sheets on a page, then please do rather than submitting them separately.
3. Staff will not respond to positive parental comments, however, they will try and respond to queries and problems. They will read them though so please continue to put them. It is good to know that your child has now got something etc.
4. Apart from the pictures of the snowmen, please just send work back and not the extra things that your child has been up to. Teachers are setting up times at the end of the week where children can talk about what they have been doing in addition to work. They are also going to set up Fun Fridays which are less formal so watch this space.

### **Devices**

As a school, we appreciate that you may not have all the devices that you need to get online. If you are struggling, please can you let me know via the Headteacher's email. We have tried to get Teams downloaded onto iPads at school, however we are still having issues with the system! New iPads are now on our list to purchase.

As a school, we also have a limited number of Laptops and therefore this has also been an issue to get small RWInc groups on Teams. We are working with this as well so please bear with us. Our school is not set up to be IT Savvy!!

### **Mental Health**

I am hoping that, as we are 'Live' and children are being given daily opportunities to talk to and see their friends and teacher then children's mental health may be better than last time. If you or your child are struggling however, please just drop us an email and we will make contact and see what we can do.

Wakefield LA have a website for Children's mental health with different activities on it. It is called Wf-i-can and has some useful ideas to build resilience etc. This is beneficial for all children.

### **Golden Book**

#### **Class 1**

Sophia Mills - For returning to school with an outstanding attitude to all learning and making her teachers extremely proud.

Maisie Cockell - For doing super writing and learning new sounds in Read Write Inc.

#### **Class 2**

Eli Platts: for persevering through some tricky work!

Spencer May: for being enthusiastic in his learning.

### **Class 3**

Derek for producing some lovely pieces of work as part of his home learning, showing excellent digital citizenship and being eager to participate during our live learning.

Holly for a fantastic description using beautiful handwriting, keep up the good work!

### **Class 4**

A message from Mrs Firth, I couldn't possibly choose 2 of you this week. I am so, so proud of the resilience you have all shown and your motivation to continue to learn. Keeping working hard!"

### **Dojo Winners for the Autumn Term**

A big well done to our all our dojo super stars from last term; you all tried so hard and we are very proud of you.

Last half term's winners are as follows:

#### **Class 2**

1st - Stuart  
2nd - Sam  
3rd – Rose

#### **Class 3**

1st - Ollie Ash  
2nd - Francesca C  
3rd - Amelie

#### **Class 4**

1st - Joshua  
2nd - Max  
3rd – Niamh

### **And Finally**



Whilst I have been sat here typing, 4 inches of snow has come down (I've measured it!) and more is falling. Please check texts before setting off tomorrow as we all need to safely travel to school.

The snow does look picture perfect though from my house!

Can anyone build a snowman higher than Mr Cowperthwaite's? (See below)



Stay safe everyone and hopefully we will see you all tomorrow, either virtually or in person.

Take care

Mrs Womersley

