

22.1.2021

Dear parents & carers,

What a few weeks it has been! Whilst the snow was a lovely surprise, it did make getting home quite treacherous for many. Thank you for your understanding whilst school was closed. We loved seeing your photos of fun in the snow – there were some very impressive snow-creations!



We are now a few weeks in to our remote learning and I am really pleased with the efforts the children have put in. We have distributed our entire stock of laptops to ensure everyone who needs a device can join in. We can still apply for more devices so don't hesitate to let us know if you need a laptop at home.

It is really important for me to stress that whilst we are now required by law to set 4 hours of work per day, you should not put yourselves or your children under undue pressure. If you find that your child's behaviour is deteriorating and you are getting into regular arguments with them, or they are suffering from anxiety or stress, please close the laptop and schoolwork. Lockdown is hard for adults and children alike and your family's health and happiness should always come first.

Supporting home learning routines
Planning the day

Consistent routines are important for behaviour and wellbeing in school and our routines at home have changed significantly. Routines support behaviour and you will be finding a new rhythm with your family. You could share this checklist with your child. Talk to them to help them plan their new routines.

The importance of simple approaches as part of a regular routine is key recommendation 4 of the EEF's guidance report [Improving Behaviour in Schools](#).

	M	T	W	T	F
I woke up at a good time.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I did some exercise.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I had regular meals and drank water.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I enjoyed some reading in a quiet space.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I practised a maths skill.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I completed some school work at my work space. I chunked it so I had some breaks too.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I talked to my family about my day and how I am feeling. I asked them about their day.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I helped with a household job and talked to my family while I did it.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I contacted my friends.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I spent some time on my creative hobby.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
My parent/carer told me what I did well.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
My goal:	<input type="checkbox"/>				
My goal:	<input type="checkbox"/>				



Remote learning

There has been some information in the news recently about the benefits of live lessons. I must stress that both Ofsted and the Education Endowment Foundation have found no evidence that live teaching is any more effective than pre-recorded.

At New Park we have made a conscious and considered decision to use pre-recorded lessons, uploaded by class teachers at 9am each morning. The benefits of this approach are:

- Children can access their learning at a time which is convenient for them and you
- Children can move through the learning at their own pace, pausing and re-winding as needed
- Children are not required to be online at the same time. This can be a real challenge if you have more than one child
- Bandwidth and pressure on internet connections is reduced (live-streaming results in lower-quality video)

Try getting into a routine each day and consider using this checklist:

[https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/Covid-19 Resources/Resources for parents/Supporting home learning routines - Planning the day.pdf](https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/Covid-19%20Resources/Resources%20for%20parents/Supporting%20home%20learning%20routines%20-%20Planning%20the%20day.pdf)

Daily check-in

We are however offering daily check-ins for all children. Each day, class teachers will invite children to join a live Teams meeting to answer questions on any of the work that has been set, and give whole-class feedback. Sometimes these will take place straight after our phase assemblies. This will also be an opportunity for children to say hello to their classmates and is proving to be the highlight of the day for many.

Reading and stationery bus

We have sourced hundreds of library books for the children to have at home during lockdown. Next week I will be driving to different locations around Harrogate for you to come and collect. We will also have a top-up of stationery including pencils, rubbers, rulers and exercise books. We have borrowed these books against the school's library cards so there are no fines for families.

Location	Date and Time
School (by EYFS entrance)	Monday 25 th January 1-2pm
AFC Harrogate (community centre)	Monday 25 th January 10-11am
Styan Community Centre, Jennyfields	Tuesday 26 th January 9:30-10:30am
St John's Church, Bilton	Thursday 28 th January 10-11am

Free school meals vouchers

I am pleased to say that we have sent out food vouchers this week to the value of £15 for each child. From next week, we are using the national voucher scheme which can be used in a range of supermarkets including Aldi, Asda, Morrisons and Sainsbury's.

Please remember that if your child is attending school during lockdown, you will have to choose whether you wish them to have a meal provided in school each day **or** the £15 voucher.

Residential

I have made the decision to cancel our Y3/4 and Y5/6 residentials booked for later this year, as it is increasingly unlikely that residential centres will be able to open. We are hoping and planning to do something special with our older children in the Summer term but I am not prepared to put your deposits at risk. You will receive a full refund within the next 14 days.

Support available

If you are struggling, please don't suffer in silence. We work closely with a number of charities and agencies in Harrogate that can offer help, whether that's food parcels (nice ones, not those you've seen on the news!), warm clothes, prescription pick ups, fuel vouchers or even help in the house such as a leaky pipe or blown lightbulbs. Please pick up the phone or send an email. We will do everything we can to help.

Protecting your mental health

Lockdown is hard. Taking care of your minds as well as your body is really important while we're stuck at home, especially when your children are looking to you for reassurance and support. Follow these tips to help support and manage your own wellbeing:

- Try to stay connected - keep in touch with friends and family, or if that's difficult your local Community Support Organisation can connect you with a befriender or local organisation. Contact NYCC on 01609 780780 to find your local Community Support Organisation
- Maintain a healthy lifestyle - try to have a proper diet, recommended sleep and exercise. Avoid using smoking, alcohol or other drugs to deal with your emotions
- Try to avoid speculation - only use reputable trusted sources of information on the pandemic
- Restart an old hobby you can do at home or start a new one
- Follow further advice from the NHS - they have provided information about mental wellbeing while staying at home. Visit www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/coronavirus-covid-19-staying-at-home-tips
- Seek support to help you feel mentally stronger - whether you call it stress, depression, fed up, sad, just not yourself, it's OK to be not OK. There are a range of sources of support available including:
 - Your GP - They are there to help if you're feeling worried about your mental health and may be able to offer an emergency appointment
 - Harrogate Mind - If you are struggling with your mental health and need someone. Contact 01423 503335 (available 8.30am - 5pm every week day)
 - North Yorkshire Out of Hours Mental Health Support helpline - Get mental health advice and support from 5pm - 8.30am weekdays and over 24 hours at the weekend. Contact 0333 0000 309 (calls are confidential and anonymous to anyone registered with a North Yorkshire GP)
 - TEVV Crisis and Support Team - If you are experiencing a mental health crisis or feeling unable to cope with mental distress. Contact 0300 0200317 to speak to a mental health professional from the crisis team

Artwork challenge

We were blown away by the response to Miss Watson's NHS challenge. She encouraged the children to write a letter of support or draw a picture and send it to Harrogate hospital to encourage the NHS heroes who are working so hard during this pandemic. One of our brilliant Year 5s created this masterpiece and hospital staff have commented on our Facebook page to say how much they have appreciated seeing it on display. A fantastic effort!

Have a restful weekend, switch off those screens and don't do any schoolwork.

Mr Mold

