

Parent Rapid Update (January 2021)

8/1/21 update

As we all again navigate new expectations and different pressures at home and school, we hope to swiftly rediscover the right balance. Please remember only to do what you can with home learning support- we attempt to provide the content and input to guide learning which is made to be flexible enough to cater for those who want a lot of challenge and pace, those who feel pressurised by home schooling expectations and every one in between.

Section A: Remote Learning

Optional Extras (including things you can get done easily just with a mobile type device)

The formal learning content from teachers is outlined in the previous update below. Additionally here are some optional activities: you can browse the school **website for signposting to learning content** we think is most relevant to fit alongside class curricula. The **Story Telling Classroom** is always accessible and updated with **picture books**, but now also with our own **literary and factoid podcasts for older children**. Furthermore (alongside regular **video assemblies**) there will also be optional **whole school projects**, starting next week with **“Try Something New - food week”**. The details about this will be in today’s assembly. But in a nutshell: take a picture of something you have baked or helped to bake and send it to us by midday Thursday 14th Jan and we will make a celebratory presentation to share with everyone. Email the picture to our new address to be used only for these mini projects:

celebrate@lpps.org.uk

Safety

I mentioned this last time, but for the benefit of those new to school: it might seem strange but it is a good idea to discuss/review with your children what to do in the event of an **emergency at home**. For example: we run a fire drill every term to check children are confident with evacuation but do they know what to do at home? Our staff fire awareness training teaches us that children sometimes panic and attempt to hide in small spaces in such an emergency.

E Safety and School Rules Reminder

The same school rules apply as last time. The Google Suite system we have is used by schools worldwide and is focused on minimising e-safety issues. For this reason all pupil to school communication should stay within the environment. The only other method of communication we use is Zoom which is controlled by teachers with passwords and waiting rooms. Pupils should not use any other platforms to share school based information, especially images. Pupils will all be aware of the E Safety Rules they agree at the start of every year. These remain in place whenever children are doing school based activities online.

Teaching Activity

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Thank you to everyone for continuing to show the Ladygrove School and Community spirit and showing patience in frustrating and/or anxious times. Continue to feedback to us where necessary. As always, bring up issues before they become too big. We are happy to discuss approaches and modify things which appear to affect any wider group. The main contention of lockdown (spawned by a combative ministerial approach and some polarising national media headlines) is that for every parent who wants more content, activity and school input there will be a parent who feels overwhelmed with it. Everyone else is on the continuum in between. Teachers will continue to navigate through the middle of this with activities that are flexible and an empathy for the difficulties at home. But it's also worth mentioning that teachers are also still new to the experience of prolonged teaching online (in essence 'Newly Qualified Online Teachers'), just as everyone else has now become an involuntary newly qualified home learning assistant. The school's well being email address wellbeing@lpps.org.uk is still operational and we regularly call or monitor engagement through Google classrooms.

Please note that **illness and medical conditions** of other kinds are still occurring amongst children and staff. For example, your child's teacher might not be available on a day they are ill themselves. We remain fortunate that in our school all teachers work in pairs (as we are 2 form entry) and can handle this eventuality to some extent.

Teachers will continue to undertake their statutory PPA on **Friday afternoons** but will signpost work for those who wish to continue at this time- such as outlined in the section above.

Section B: Onsite Adapted Care

To be clear, school uniform is **not** necessary.

We are still bound by **bubble isolation rules**. We might have to close a bubble if there is a positive case-based on the same rules as last term. This is the case even though there is now further social distancing in school: the children still remain together for a very long period and are therefore close contacts.

Bear in mind that staff are **unable to make pastoral contact** with children on the very rare occasion that they might struggle with anxiety to enter school. Please have a plan B ready for return to home, if your child cannot be encouraged in.

Parents with **vulnerable children** - we will continue to talk to you regularly throughout this time to discuss the level of health safety in the community and jointly decide on their attendance plan.

Due to the temporary flexibility of staffing rotas we are able to complete the full day on **Fridays until 3.10pm** (teachers will still take their PPA on Friday afternoons). However, there remains fragility in the timetabling due to the necessity for staff to be working onsite with some children and online with the majority.

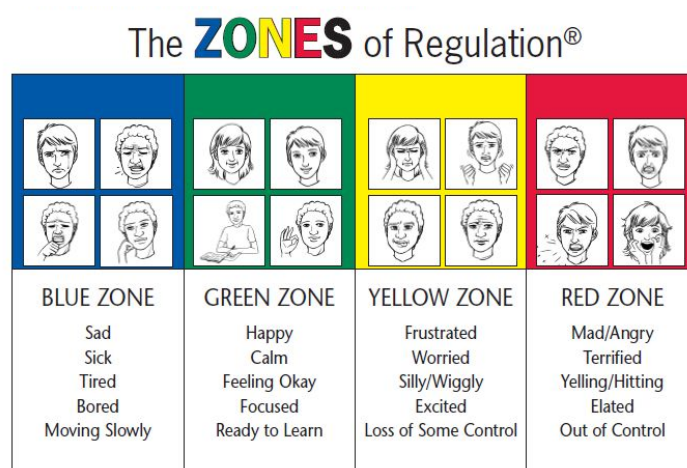
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Section B: Other Matters

Local Covid Picture

Currently high- a larger number of children have been isolating following positive cases for them or a household member after Christmas. Plus NHS data show Ladygrove Estate currently has one of the highest rates in the Didcot area. Please keep safe and act safely.

In less relevant news, Virgin Media caused a whole new school issue after 24 hours of our meticulous replanning (following the prime ministers no-notice strategy for schools) when without any warning they blocked off the schools main public entrance 5 minutes before we reopened. I spent some time using the ‘zones of regulation’ emotional literacy techniques we use with the children after that event.



“Emotional Literacy is the ability to recognise, understand and appropriately express emotions. People who are emotionally literate are often more successful in education and their careers and more resilient to the ups and downs of life.”

You might like to use this system with your child at home. At school we do a ‘check in’ and ask them which zone they are in and why.

5/1/21 update

It is truly sad to again be working in a school which lacks the vibrancy and energy of all the children excitedly returning from their holidays. As harsh as it feels, if this further temporary adjustment to learning goes some way to allay serious health issues it is hopefully for the best. Although it eventually seemed inevitable that the PM would announce a new lockdown, due to the concerning acceleration of cases, the length of time was still a surprise. This is an obvious signpost to the seriousness of the situation.

Please note that these updates will continue during the lockdown through to February half term- they will be published at any time there is new information to share. As a parent, I understand the stress

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sometimes incurred by a large amount of information coming from school so, as before, I will attempt to start each update with *key points* followed by greater *detail* for those who want more information. With this approach, we hope to reach more parents directly rather than by word of mouth.

The updates are in relevant sections as before:

Section A Remote Learning provision

Section B Home Support/ Other Matters

Section C Onsite 'Adapted Provision' for Vulnerable Children and Critical Workers' children

Section A Remote Learning provision

Key Points

The lockdown implications are being taken very seriously by all staff. We empathise with the pressure of caring for your child while trying to support their online learning and work from home.

Our plans and activity around remote learning are reviewed continuously and also formally reviewed at weekly staff meeting. At this time, SLT specifically monitor online teaching and governors collaborate on the strategic approach.

Children are expected to join their Google Classroom from tomorrow **Weds 6th January by 9am** and thereafter at the request of their teacher.

Remote learning will begin with the teacher outlining your **year group's curriculum for the term** (e.g. the term's Curriculum Newsletter and Learning Organiser) and setting out an example timetable for each day.

This might be **adapted depending on arising circumstances** and monitoring of the childrens' engagement.

Detail

We recognise that this time away might cause variation between childrens' learning levels or knowledge but, we know these can be addressed on their later return to a safer environment (as we did on return in September).

Teachers are mindful of the possible issues created by broadband limits, lack of devices in the family and take this into account when designing the provision online.

It is likely but not statutory that, each day, children will be offered a combination of:

- Maths (inc. Timestables Rockstars fluency practice)

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- English (inc. Reading)
- Subject learning e.g. Science, Art, History, Languages etc.
- Mental Health and Well-Being activities
- Physical health activities

Teachers will give children:

- Timings of the Google Classroom lessons/sessions;
- The set times of any live lessons;
- Deadlines for completion of assigned work;
- Timings when they are available for learning support dialogue.

We have coordinated teacher time to minimise clashes of live interaction between siblings in different classes.

Please refer to the School's Remote Learning Policy:

[Updated Link](#)

SLT will review and monitor provision across the school.

Last term, as part of our recovery curriculum, we worked with children on useful methods for self regulated learning. Classes online will include a variety of methods for addressing learning such as retrieval practice, low-stakes quizzes, spaced reviews, 'big Ideas/big questions', Enquiry Based Learning and metacognition including self-help skills.

Gap analysis is on going for all children from last term and will also shape the provision for remote learning going forward.

Section B Home Support/Other Matters

Safeguarding of children continues to be a key driver

It is a stark fact that some will find this period of isolation very difficult. It is important to restate that the school continues to use our normal safeguarding methods but, due to remote learning some methods have changed:

If you are concerned that there is a safeguarding issue emerging involving a child at home you must refer this directly to external services. Then share your concerns with the school so we are aware of them but to be clear we cannot act on third party information in these lockdown circumstances- we cannot reliably recount an incident to the appropriate body on your behalf, it must come from you: Contact 999 in an emergency or the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) if you have urgent concerns

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for a child, or suspect that a child has been abused in any way, please call immediately on 0300 500 80 80 (if you are a member of the public).

Assemblies and Story Telling Classroom

These are videos which the children have been accessing daily in their class bubbles at school and will now be signposted in Google Classroom by teachers.

Pupils registered as in need of Free School Meals (not Universal Free School Meals)

During this period the DfE have informed us of a newly determined approach. Food parcels/small hampers will be made available by us for pick up from school once a fortnight. These are the raw ingredients for a fortnight of lunches. We are contacting registered parents individually about this.

Covid cases local trend- shared where possible

We will share the local community picture (Ladygrove estate) whenever we have information about decline or increase in cases- obviously not the specific cases.

Support for those pupils who have very limited broadband or device access

Learning packs have been put together and we will be in touch with parents who we know to have a serious need due to lack of devices or reliable broadband.

Things to look forward to

- Parent Evenings usually take place in February (before half term). We currently intend to run these in Term 4 or 5 instead.
- Year 4 Hill End Residential and Year 6 Kilvrough Residential are still booked and since they take place in the summer term we are working with the full intention of carrying these out.
- Once things settle we hope to start a discussion between school and PALs about a big summer celebration. We will create a survey to get a collaborative view from everyone on how to celebrate.

Section C Onsite 'Adapted Provision' for Vulnerable Children and Critical Workers' children

- If you have applied through the Google survey form (or emailed the school by the time of this update being published) and **have not heard from us then you can assume that your child(ren) is on the onsite register for your requested days**. However, with relatively high numbers, we may approach you at some point to talk about the rationale behind your child attending school if there appears to be capacity for them to be looked after safely at home.
- **Drop off at 8.40am: enter the school car park** and follow directions
- **Pick up at 3.10pm: enter the school car park** and follow directions to the same place as drop off

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- **Do not drive in to the school car park** as this will be used constantly by pedestrians
- If your child requires a hot school dinner please tell us at drop off (unfortunately this is still chargeable unless your child already has free school meals)
- If at any time your child gets symptoms please arrange a test (drive-through is still most efficient) and follow national guidance. Inform us.
- If symptoms become apparent in your household you must stop bringing your child to school and isolate for 10 days. Inform us.
- On the first day drop off may take some time, as we implement this new protocol- please be patient.
- Breakfast Club and After School Club will not restart until next week at the earliest. We will update you as soon as plans are in place.
- Attending children have been placed in new smaller bubbles (small groups which they remain with while onsite and might be of mixed, but similar, age). Bubbles are not themselves a protective measure, they are a management measure in the event of a case or outbreak.
- However, groups are small and designed to be able to socially distance at all times including in class. This is a protective measure. Nevertheless, please be aware that isolation may still occur if a positive case is found.
- We have been asked to emphasise that **only parents who have applied for a place can attend school**. We cannot admit your child if we have not pre-arranged it with you. We understand circumstances change and review registers daily.

Refer to key worker/vulnerable definition and guidance here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

Questions to ask before attending onsite provision:

If children can stay safely at home, they should, to limit the chance of the virus spreading. That is why the government has asked parents to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and asked schools to remain open only for those children who absolutely need to attend.

1. Is this **childcare unavoidable** and is it **specifically** for my work **to support those who need help or to stop the virus spread**?
2. Do I have **contact with others who are elderly or vulnerable** and sending my child to school could lead to further spread?
3. Is my child or anyone in my household **showing symptoms**. Contact us to give us this information and **do not enter the site**.

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Note that it remains possible that the school could still close entirely, either due to severe lack of staff or outbreak. Complete closure will be communicated via the app and website as soon as the decision is made.

We understand that sometimes you might need to alter your child's attendance. Please aim to give us at least 2 days notice when you want your child to start or stop attending- this is to ensure we have the appropriate staffing in place.

To ensure registers are always complete we will ask you to confirm your days for the following week by the Thursday PM of each week.

It is important to underline that schools, colleges and other educational establishments remain safe places for children. But the fewer children making the journey to school, and the fewer children in educational settings, the lower the risk that the virus can spread and infect vulnerable individuals in wider society.

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4/1/21 Evening Update

This is a rough and brief update to inform you of our actions since the Prime Minister's unexpected, but equally unsurprising, announcement earlier.

It seemed inevitable, according to the rising virus data, but was still a shock to have to close the school to most pupils again.

More information will follow tomorrow.

Remote Learning

School staff will now begin **Remote Learning for all children** with their reintroduction to the online format and expectations. Pupils should log in to their Google Classroom by 9am on Wednesday 6th January to find everything they need to know from their teacher. Although we thoroughly prepared our Remote Learning Policy last year and spent time during the INSET day today anticipating a new remote learning eventuality, teachers still need time tomorrow to switch their face to face planning to online versions.

Vulnerable Children and Critical Worker care- starts Wednesday 6th January

School will be closed to all except those who are defined as Vulnerable and/or those whose parents/carers are Critical Workers (working to fight the virus or for infrastructure).

Please note before applying for a place:

- This is onsite adapted provision which is unlikely to be provided by your child's own teacher due to their remote learning work.
- The more children we have onsite the less effective the national and local strategies may become.
- The government have closed schools to most as a way to mitigate the latest spike in virus spread.

Please check the official definition of Vulnerable Children and Children of Critical Workers here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

The form to apply for a place is here:

<https://forms.gle/xeKozuPmgRHCmiGC9>

This form is open from now and closes at **midday tomorrow Tuesday 5th January**.

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After this deadline please email office.2609@ladygrove-park.oxon.sch.uk if your circumstances change.

It is necessary for us to create a register of attendance and then work out the staffing. Due to the short notice of the Prime Minister's announcement, even with pre planning, it is not possible to safely and thoroughly organise staffing and attendance by tomorrow. **School will be closed to all for Tuesday 5th January** as we wait for responses, prepare registers and coordinate staff based on the numbers. We recognise and empathise with the inconvenience created by the extreme short notice of the government announcement. Attendance for these children will start on Wednesday 6th January.

- The next update will follow tomorrow with more information about remote learning and onsite provision/logistics.
- Please continue to update us with your home circumstances regarding isolation and any positive cases. In this way, we can continue to track and feedback virus trend within the local community.
- Responses to any school queries may be delayed over the next few days as we switch over our extensive planning and processes.