

‘INFORMATION PART OPENING update :: 29 01 21’

INFORMATION:: PART OPENING:: SPRING 2021

Please note INSET day on 22nd February

The information in this document will be reviewed, adapted and re-communicated on an ongoing basis. Any update will be in red- please flick through!

Last update: 29 01 21 -

A survey will be sent to staff and parents on a two weekly basis to inform the review. This week's survey can be found at

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=DQSIkWdsW0yxEjajBLZtrQAAAAAAAAAAAO_RdCbIRUMjUzM0EwUTM2SDITUDk2NVZTWTQ5WEFYVS4u

Next steps already agreed:

1. **Year 1** to upload phonics/ Maths/ English on **Google classroom** from now on.. All other work on Tapestry. See letter sent.
2. **Book amnesty** next week - for books finished- please root around for and return school books to outside the school entrance at the drop off time between 3.30 and 5. As part of this if all parents of younger pupils could return their scheme books and their choosing books they borrowed over christmas (which they will not have had a chance to return yet).
3. **Learning resource packs** available for Reception pupils to be picked up in front of entrance 3.30-5.00
4. **White boards and pens**- 1 of each for all of Reception/ Year 1 and Year 2- again to be picked up in front of entrance 3.30-5.00.
5. **Please, if possible**, could you email beforehand the teacher who is about to run your child's session, if your child will be unable to attend. It saves the teachers ringing around to find out if there have been any technical difficulties etc.

Some common themes from the latest survey/ elsewhere: from parents and staff and progress with/response to these

More specific requests will be considered by the class teachers

1. Can there be further clarity re what expected of pupils – can classes issue curriculum maps as they normally do to give parents an idea of what is covered this term. Please accept the bigger picture is harder to pin down at present. Teachers know what they intend to cover and are trying to maintain consistency across in-school and on-line learners as far as is possible with the set up we have, but equally they are needing to stay responsive to change and to emerging needs and pressures in both contexts- home and school. While we understand the request for a curriculum map -it would probably rapidly find itself out of date. Please accept the padlet as a broad guide and allow yourself to be guided in the short term by the teaching and the tasks.
2. Can we have a single place to find out the daily work expectations for each class because it is time consuming going into several different google classrooms etc to find out. This is a sensible notion that will be put to the teachers.
3. Can we try to reinstate the 1:1 phone chats with children from last summer? This worked well but was time consuming. We had more time during the first lockdown but we do not have the capacity this time around. We will do our very best to make phone calls to pupils/ parents upon request. We will also look to use our pastoral team, where appropriate, as back up. To achieve this for all would probably entail a more radical structural shift- eg only pupils of critical key workers in school every other friday- this to allow class teachers to contact their pupils then.
4. Please can you provide paper copies of reading scheme books for younger pupils working at home so pupils don't need to read online. Please note if we were to do this for some, we would have to offer to all- while we

always strive to respond to individual needs, on something like this it would have to be an open offer. Logistically this could be quite a challenge if lots of parents took up the offer. I have not shut the door on this idea but I need a couple of things before I can even consider going further:- 1. I would need all scheme books taken out over Christmas (approx 3 per child) returned so that we have enough books in school (we will look to engineer this next week) and 2. I would need assurance from parents that scheme books are always returned- sorry to say this but I think you have a right to know- the cost of replenishing unreturned scheme books ran into the hundreds last summer.

5. **Please can we try to bring down the number of pupils in school given high risk?** Despite it being educationally more complicated, we would now prefer that parents keep their children off school wherever possible; this to keep the numbers down and the risk controlled whenever possible.
6. **Please lower your expectations- this is really tough and we end up feeling like failures.** Apologies if we have made you feel like this. We have to maintain some expectations for the sake of clarity and for the sake of children's progress. However pressures on families duly noted again and we will look to be more understanding.
7. **Provision for those at school/ at home needs to be fairer and/or conditions for sending children in tighter otherwise others will send their children in.** Please don't do this. Our numbers are average - higher than we would like but average. We will continue to work hard to ensure consistency and fairness. Please see below in HT piece.
8. **Can there be more specific provision for pupils who are previously high attaining in maths to give them more challenge? Teachers will be already looking to accommodate all learners within a lesson but we will discuss this and come back to you.**

Dear Parents and Staff

This has proved a difficult week for parents. When I try to visualise some of the scenarios you are facing at home, I wince and shake my head. This is an impossible juggling act and I suspect too often you will feel you are failing on one front or another or on all fronts. What is there to say other than to go easy on yourselves; to put away any thoughts of failing and accept the situation for what it is- certainly not one of your own making. If you are worried about your child's progress, I will not have helped by talking of expectations. Please just do the best you can and know that, despite the alarmist noise out there, it will be ok and your children will be fine. They have you and they have us and we will make it so.

There has been plenty of talk of fairness this week and in particular, as parents at home hit the pain barrier, the inequities inherent in the system as it stands. Despite the valiant efforts of teachers to maintain as consistent as possible a learning offer across the school as they can, there are too many variables out there to contend with, especially when it comes to people's home situation- work commitments, numbers of children, age of children, numbers of devices, internet reliability. We will do our best. I promise you we will go on listening; go on trying to solve people's individual dilemmas; go on exploring ways of adapting our overall offer so that it works well enough for the highest number of families possible.

I am mindful in particular to keep an eye on the big shapes: the system we have come up with. I have enormous faith in my team, especially in their commitment to putting the children's needs first and their commitment to the individual. However, they operate within a structure and this puts natural limitations on what they can achieve. At Minchinhampton we are effectively operating two teams - one managing the remote learning and the other learning in school. This structure in turn is in many ways defined by our context- the fact that we are a Primary school, our size and demographics. The Secondary School situation offers a poor comparison. My youngest daughter goes into Deer Park School for some of the week and there she sits on a school computer all day doing the online lessons (with some supervision) that she would have been doing out of school. Clearly the offer in school is almost identical with the offer out of it. However, in Primary School we have that many more children in school, they are younger and less independent and we don't have enough computers to give one to every child. We will be prepared, of course, to not just fine tune our offer but if necessary overhaul the whole thing. We know no one way is perfect but we won't shy away from accepting the need for radical change if it presents itself.

In continuing to review the overall offer, two key things vie for our attention (amongst others): firstly the safety of children and adults in school and secondly the satisfaction/ wellbeing of children and parents at home. Despite some reassurance recently from National Statistics about level of risk in school compared to other walks of 'outside the home' life, we must be wary that this is a new virus strain with a younger infection profile. We also need to be wary of throwing statistics around and drawing on them too readily when we are all living this thing emotionally as well as rationally. With this in mind, if the numbers rise much more in school, we may well need to restructure and this could in turn have an impact on our online offer- in other words nothing comes for free. In the same vein whatever approach we take will sometimes not work for some and the response from parents will be hugely varied depending upon their circumstances. For example, for some, this week's Wednesday catch up day was disruptive for its lack of structure; for others it was a release into something more creative and pleasurable. Please be as patient with us as your difficult circumstances allow: this lockdown is now a longer haul than first promised (something we all suspected but a hard realisation all the same) and we all need to pace ourselves. I, in turn, offer here some reassurance that, despite my care to lay down work expectations for children last week (something I have to do), we remain trusting that our parents are doing their level best and will find the right balance for their families.

Thank you for your kindness and for working with us on this. Good luck with it all.

Kind regards

Mr Moss

SCHOOL LEARNING

Signing up for school

Please follow the link below to book your child a place in school. We will repeat this every 2 weeks. Please complete this and submit it by **12.00noon on Wednesday 27th January 2021**.

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=DQSIkWdsW0yxEjajBLZtrQAAAAAAAAAAAO_RdCbIRUOVbNTIJDRVhSNENMQTRYsIk4NEZNN0hWMS4u

Numbers in school

We have, at present, about 100 pupils coming into school across the week. This is partly because the key worker list has been extended and this number reflects the national picture. We will consider further requests but please be mindful we are treading a tightrope here between pupil educational and emotional welfare and staff safety and we are having to make some difficult decisions.

What do my children need to bring to school?

Washable bag

Inhalers- Please remember to bring in inhalers and medication, if we do not already have them in school.

Packed lunch (unless ordering a school one). If your child is eligible for Universal Free School Meals (Rec/ Yr1/2) or Free School Meals a packed lunch can be provided on the day - your child/ren will be asked what they would like in their baguette during registration. Please provide your child with a packed lunch if they are not eligible for either of the above.

Healthy snack- Fruit and veg has been cancelled. Please can we remind everyone to provide their child/ren with a snack for their break time while they are in school - please can we ensure it is either a piece of fruit / veg or a healthy snack.

Water bottle (but not Nursery children)

Hand cream- children bringing in their own hand lotion should make sure it has their name on it.

Reading records and books every day please

What should they wear?

School uniform to be worn.

Warm weather clothing- we will still look to work outside whenever possible

Shoes that are practical and sensible for outdoor learning. For the younger pupils- shoes that don't have laces or children that can tie laces.

PE Kits in by Monday please - we will keep these in school.

We would suggest that once your child arrives back home, they change their clothes immediately and the clothes they've worn at school are washed.

Entering and exiting school

We will be insisting that all adults entering the grounds wear a mask and remain socially distanced if they need to line up. A previous communication said no exceptions regarding masks- this was unwise. There are clearly justifiable exemptions from mask wearing and we must appreciate our differences. Please be sure to wear a mask if you can and if not, then please maintain social distancing.

Please be mindful that this virus now spreads more easily and we should not make too many assumptions about safety outdoors. Please keep a good distance away from other adults and step aside to let people pass where necessary.

Please can you make sure your child washes their hands with soap and water prior to leaving home in the morning and as soon as they return home in the afternoon.

Please bring as few people to the school as possible to limit the number of people on the school site- only one parent to accompany the child to school.

Please ensure your child is left under the supervision of a member of staff before leaving the school grounds.

The car park and drop off zone will be closed to traffic- this to allow safe flow of pedestrians into school. Please park away from school and walk in.

8.45 School starts

3.15 Pick up time

(Nursery please continue to come in at **9.00am** but please come to the main Nursery entrance via the gate on Church Lane and up the slope)

Entrances:

5/6- top field gate

3/4- bottom playground

2- up the steps and in the small gate outside Azure class

R/Yr 1- Common Gate and down

Wrap Round Cover- Breakfast Club and Fun Club will be on as usual. You need to sign up for it and pay for it online as usual <https://schoolcomms.com/> - Please email breakfastclub@minchscool.net or funclub@minchscool.net to book places up to February half Term. Please note, Fridays, are only open until 5.00pm not 5.30pm.

Lunchtimes

Hot dinners will be provided as of the 1st Feb.

Children will eat in the hall or their classroom.

Please ensure children can open everything in their lunch box to enable us to maintain the social distancing guidelines. All rubbish from home packed lunches will be sent home.

Contact with school

Please phone or email wherever possible. The answer phone will not be used and admin staff will be available to answer any of your queries.

If you need a longer conversation to discuss your child, the office will organise a telephone appointment for you with the relevant member of staff so avoiding face to face meetings.

If you do need to come into the school –you will need to initially speak on the intercom. There will be a queuing system as elsewhere and hand sanitiser at the entrance, to use before you enter. Please try and avoid coming into the school office unless it is an emergency.

Contact with a teacher about learning

If you have any questions linked to your child's learning in school, then please contact the teacher/s teaching your child in school and if you have any questions about your child's learning online, please direct them to one of the online team. The email addresses of all teachers in each team should be on the class padlet page.

Please note teachers working in school may take longer to reply. Emails will be responded to after the school day and at least within 24 hours.

Teaching and learning

Mornings- Maths and English focus

Afternoons- other subjects

REMOTE LEARNING

English and maths remote learning will look to complement what is happening in school to enable those pupils who are working in both contexts to cross from one to the other with relative ease and to ensure equality of opportunity.

Online teaching-- direct online teaching 'slots' to avoid, as far as is possible, clashes with siblings working in other classes.

Daily:

- 8.30- 9.30 yr 3/4
- 9.30- 10.30 yr 2
- 9.00 - 9:30 yr 1 Phonics
- 10:15-11:00 yr 1 Maths
- 10.30- 11.30 yr 5/6
- 11.30-12.30 yr 3/4
- 12.30-1.30 yr 2
- 1.30-2.30 yr 5/6
- 1.45 -2.15 yr R (Thursdays) yr 1 (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday) - sharing and talking the morning's learning
- **14:30 - 15:00 yr R (Mondays) - sharing and talking about learning**

To access the live sessions, please follow these instructions:

1. Log on to your child's school email account and click on the nine dots in the upper right corner of the screen.
2. Click on Google Classroom.
3. Click on the + button in the upper right corner of the screen.
4. Click 'Join a Class'.
5. Enter the code/ joining link for your class

You only have to join once - not every time you log on, so most of the time they will only have to do steps one and two and then they will be in.

Once you have completed the above five steps, we will be able to send you Google Meet links for the live sessions. We will send a link immediately before each session is due to start. The link will be different every time, so you must follow the most recent link to access the correct Google Meet.

If you experience any technical difficulties, please contact the class teacher or the school office.

Please see individual letters for different phases for further guidance.

Some year groups will be pre-recording material to be watched at intervals throughout the day.

All lessons will be recorded for safeguarding purposes.

We want to establish timetables for pupil learning so pupils/ parents have a structure to work to and upon which to hang their expectations. We expect these to be fully embedded by the end of next week.

We are finding that some children are logging into Google Classroom via accounts that are not their own school email account. To maximise the children's ease of access to Google Classroom, minimise confusion and ensure that we are doing our utmost to safeguard the children whilst they are working online please could you ensure that your child/ren only log in to Google Classroom via their own *@minchschoo.net* account.

IT devices for home

Consideration is needed for families without multiple devices.

If you have any spare IT devices at home, we are taking donations into school. We will recycle them properly and get them to families who need them. It goes without saying- please take off all the data you need before handing them in because all data will be removed.

If you have not enough IT devices at home, please let us know and we will work towards getting you either a recycled one or a new one. We have ordered a large number of Chrome Books.

Google Classrooms through Xbox and Playstations.

We know many families have to juggle a finite number of devices (laptops/tablets/phones etc) in order to facilitate access to live lessons and other learning activities. If your family has an X Box or PlayStation games console you may not know that these too can be used to access Google Classroom and all its functions.

Students who use a console to connect to Google Classroom can use their games controller as a mouse but need the addition of a simple keyboard for full use. If this is something that may be beneficial for you, then there are some brief instructions below detailing how to access Google Classroom via an Xbox or a Playstation:

How to use Google Classroom on Xbox One & Xbox Series X/S

The Xbox consoles each have access to Microsoft Edge - the web browser that comes pre-installed as part of the Xbox user experience. This can be used to access Google Classroom and EduLink.

1. Plug a wired keyboard into your Xbox One, Xbox Series X or Xbox Series S via one of the USB ports on the front or back.
2. Press the Xbox button top-centre of a game controller and head to "My games & apps" in the side menu.
3. Click on "See all", scroll down to "Apps" and you will see Microsoft Edge in the icons on the right-hand side. Open it.

4. Type classroom.google.com into the URL bar at the top and log in as you would on a PC using your school Gmail account.

5. You can either use an Xbox controller to move the cursor or a separate USB mouse plugged into one of the other ports.

How to use Google Classroom on PS4 & PS5

The PlayStation 4 has its own web browser that is easy to find on the PlayStation 4 (in the content menu as an icon with WWW written on it). However, it's currently a bit trickier on PS5, as there is no way to open the browser natively.

Instead, you can open the System Settings, then the User Guide. This will open up an online user manual inside a web browser page so you only have to change the URL at the top. Otherwise, the rest of the steps are the same.

1. Plug a wired keyboard and/or mouse into the USB ports on the PS4 or PS5 - each console should recognise them.

2. In the URL bar of the browser, type classroom.google.com and then log in using the details provided by your child's school.

3. You can now access Google Classroom.

Borrowing books from school

Pupils in younger classes are signed up to the online 'Bug Club' or can access "Oxford Owls" online. Both schemes follow the phonic scheme they use in school. We will not be sending out paper copy scheme books.

If parents require:-

- books from the library (including picture books for younger pupils)

they should email- library@minchschoo.net.

Mrs Webb and teachers/ TA's will work together to prepare packs of several books.

If you can, parents, please include any information you think would be useful in choosing the right books for your child e.g. books and/or authors they've enjoyed reading, or maybe a genre or subject they particularly like - funny, adventure, animal stories...

Once we have chosen the books, you will receive an email notifying you of your collection day.

Books will be in a bag labelled with your child's name and can be picked up from the table at the school's front entrance between 3.30 and 5.00.

You will not need to enter the building or inform anyone of your presence.

Book returns

To return the books, please put them in a bag labelled 'library returns' along with your child's name and class, then place them in the box marked 'Returns', also at the front entrance to the school.

We still have a number of books borrowed over the past 9 months that have not yet been returned to the school, - we would be grateful if you could check for any of these and return them to the school as above. Not wanting to state the obvious but we cannot lend books if they are not returned.

If you are returning books that belong to a class/teacher, please could they be put in a bag labeled with their name e.g Miss Tonner/Sapphire Class.

Picking up resources/ books etc from school

There will now be one standard pick up point and pick up time for all books/ resources/ paper copies etc going home.

The pick up point will be from tables put out near the main school entrance below the school office.

The pick up time will be from 3.30- 5.00pm

You should be notified by your teacher if there is something for you to pick up.

Content of teaching and learning online

Focus of direct online teaching and learning (and pre-recorded) - maths, English, phonics, reading as well as for yr R/1- learning catch up and snack and chat.

Focus of padlet - other subjects

Means provided for all pupils to show their English and Maths work - and receive feedback

Broader curriculum through Padlet/ Tapestry- means for pupils to upload their learning and receive feedback from teacher or class.

We have ordered mini-white boards and pens to support younger pupils recording work to upload online. We will find a way to get these back to you.

Expectations re completing and submitting of work

Subject	Complete and submit please	Where
Maths	Daily	Google classroom/ Tapestry
English	Regularly - upon request	Google classroom/ Tapestry
Phonics	Daily	Google classroom/ Tapestry
Reading	Daily, submit weekly	Reading records/ link books
Other subjects	Broadly a choice but Some work will be priority complete and submit after ½ term (every other Wednesday devoted to subjects other than maths and English)	Padlet/ Tapestry

Feedback

Teachers cannot provide feedback for all work submitted.

They will be prioritising some work which they will give 1:1 feedback on;

the rest will be a mix of:-

- oral feedback live in lessons and in drop in sessions;
- feedback on the chat function online;
- sharing and commentary on padlet;
- pupils supported to self mark.

Pupils seeing each other/ pastoral

R/1 will be doing this in a more fluid, ongoing way

Year 2 to Year 6 will have pastoral drop-ins with groups of pupils across the day. On this day all English and maths work will be suspended and pupils will have the chance to complete some learning in other subjects from the padlet page, as well as joining one of the timetabled group sessions. The make up of these groups will be random and pupils will receive an invite.