

# LEYBOURNE SS PETER & PAUL C E PRIMARY ACADEMY



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Dear Parents

It is strange to think that we are approaching a month since we officially closed the school to the majority of pupils. It seems like such a long time ago that we were all together, although as I write the children have only actually missed 12 days of school, due to much of the closure time covering the Easter holiday period. Who could have predicted the events of the past few weeks when we returned to school in January?

The situation regarding the national effort to fight the Covid -19 pandemic continues to evolve. To this end, the Department for Education have offered updated information, guidance and support for parents and carers of children who are learning at home. This updated guidance includes specific advice for parents on how education can continue at home for children aged 2-4 <<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/help-children-aged-2-to-4-to-learn-at-home-during-coronavirus-covid-19>>, at primary school <<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/help-primary-school-children-continue-their-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>> and with special educational needs and disabilities <<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/help-children-with-send-continue-their-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>>.

On Sunday, many of you will have heard Gavin Williamson, the Secretary of State for Education, announce a major new package to support online learning. This package offers additional support for (predominantly) secondary school pupils experiencing difficulty accessing online learning, but also includes the launch of two new or updated online learning resources - The Oak National Academy and the revised BBC Bitesize website.

Unfortunately, Headteachers and other school staff heard this announcement at the same time as the rest of the population, so we have spent today finding out as much as we can about these resources, in order to support you as best we can with their implementation.

## **Oak National Academy**

The Oak National Academy is a new online classroom and resource hub, which was launched yesterday to support teachers until schools re-open. As part of a collective response to the crisis, 40 teachers will be producing over 180 free online lessons each week through this platform, which will cover a range of subjects from English and maths to arts and languages. The online lessons and resources can be found here: <https://thenational.academy/>

From all we have seen, the Oak National Academy lessons are very good, and offer a clearly structured approach. Unfortunately, however, they offer lessons on a weekly basis, and only release each week's lessons on the Monday. We have obviously already spent a great deal of time

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planning and resourcing our curriculum. Whilst we would love to use the Oak National Academy lessons to support our curriculum, we are unable to wait until Monday to see how it fits in with what we have planned for the week. It is imperative that we retain control of our curriculum, knowing that it is this that the children will return to when school reopens. Therefore, we would suggest that you view the lessons and resources available on the Oak National Academy site as complementary to the home learning activities we have set, and will continue to set over the coming weeks.

### **BBC Bitesize**

In addition, this week the BBC launched its own education package as part of their Charter across TV and online – helping to keep children learning and supporting parents. The revamped site offers lovely (child-friendly) videos and PowerPoints, plus worksheets that are also linked to Twinkl. There is also a useful guide for parents. Again, we would recommend that parents use this resource alongside our published home learning resources - it is very user friendly and we think the children will enjoy what it has to offer.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize>

### **Kent Test 2020**

I am acutely aware that parents of children in Year 5 will be concerned about the implications of this lockdown on their children and the Kent Test. To this end, I would like to share with you the following information from the Local Authority, which I received last night:

It is understandable that families would like to have a clear idea of what is going to happen to the Kent Test in the light of the current Covid-19 lockdown, but unfortunately it is too early to confirm anything other than that provision will be made for children to be assessed so that Kent's grammar schools can determine which of their applicants can be admitted.

A selection mechanism of some type will need to be applied, however, as it is unclear when restrictions will be released, or whether schools will be back in session before September, it would be premature to fix a solution now. There is national legislation around the co-ordinated admissions process, so the action which can be taken regarding the timing of the Kent Test will also depend on advice from the DfE, which has yet to be issued.

The loss of direct teaching time is concerning but unavoidable. All schools are continuing to provide support for their Year 5 pupils and there are many National Curriculum resources available free online. Our website has also offered access to free familiarisation material for a number of years. Unlike the national exams which have been cancelled, the Kent Test does not examine a taught syllabus. The process which determines what level of test performance will constitute a "pass" is set by KCC after the test has been completed, so there is also scope for flexibility when the Council considers the impact of the lockdown on everyone taking part.

A more detailed plan will be shared as soon as it is available.

I am not sure if this is reassuring or not - but at least you know the Local Authority are thinking about it, even if they are not yet in a position to make a decision as to how the process will operate!

Take care and stay safe - it has been lovely to see some of you (from an appropriate distance!) when you have collected home learning packs or reading books this week. We miss you all!

Kind regards

Tina Holditch  
Headteacher