

LEYBOURNE SS PETER & PAUL C E PRIMARY ACADEMY



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Dear Parents,

It has been lovely to see some of you over the past few days as you return and collect reading books and home learning packs! I am so pleased to hear of the wonderful things you have been doing with your children during this period of school closure. Thank you so much for your support. It has also been lovely to hear that so many of you are enjoying the home learning activities the teachers have worked so hard to produce. I know that the teachers really value your feedback - thank you.

I am aware that some members of staff (myself included!) have been responding to emails outside of school hours. It is likely that I will continue to do so during this time, as I balance working both in school and at home, with caring for my own family. However, I am asking teachers to protect their own work-life balance as far as possible by not responding to emails outside the hours of 8:30am and 4:00pm. I appreciate that some staff did respond to emails over the weekend, as they were checking the class accounts for the first time, but would please ask that you do not expect responses from them outside school hours as a matter of course. Last weekend was exceptional! Thank you.

We are amending the system for changing reading books slightly, to make it a little more manageable for the staff who are endeavouring to deal with numerous requests for new books! From Monday, we shall be preparing packs of books for all children on the reading scheme. You will then be able to come to school on Monday, Wednesday or Friday to collect your child's new books. *You will not need to inform us that you are coming in to collect new books, as they will already be prepared for you.* Please note that we will still be able to only change each child's books once per week. If your child finishes the books that have been sent home, please do re-read them and also feel free to read other books as well. Conversely, if your child has not finished all of the books that have been sent home, please do not worry! We are deliberately issuing more books than your child would usually be expected to read in a week, just to try to minimise the number of trips you have to make to school, and to ensure you have enough reading material at home. Just work through them, and change them when you are ready. Please do ensure that you return your current books when collecting the new ones, thank you.

Some parents are worried that their children will not have covered all of the home learning activities that we have set, and have asked whether we will be covering this work when we return to school. At this stage, we do not know when this will be –

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in a caring, happy Christian environment**



whether we will return to school after half term, or next academic year. Whilst we obviously do appreciate that each family's circumstances are different (some parents are trying to juggle working from home, others not; some families have just one child to support and focus on, others have children of varying ages to work with), I am afraid that we will not be able to completely revisit all of the work that has been set during this period. We will, of course, work with all of the children at an appropriate level to support their learning, and to ensure that their needs are met as we move forwards– but I cannot honestly say that we will be able to teach everything that is being covered during this period. It simply would not be feasible to ask teachers to go back over all of this work, knowing that many of the children have completed it as set. Our priority will obviously be to ensure that the children have kept up with English and maths, and then to build on their other learning.

Our staff are incredibly skilled and very experienced at identifying and addressing pupils' individual needs. I have absolutely no doubt that, when we return to school, all of our staff will be able to address any gaps in the children's learning, at an appropriate level and time in order to support them all.

Social media is full of quotes and memes at the moment. Some are more apt than others! However, I saw a quote just recently that really made me think about the impact of this situation on the children. At the risk of being totally twee, I am going to paraphrase it for you – not to say how wonderful teachers are (although they really are!!) but also to remind you that right now, at this horrible, confusing and scary time, your children are exactly where they need to be, with the people they need to be with.

“Don't stress about schoolwork. In September (or before!) we will get your children back on track. We are teachers and that's what we do. What we can't easily fix is social-emotional trauma that prevents the brain from learning. So right now, we just need you to share your calm, share your strength and share your laughter with your children. No child is ahead. No child is behind. Your children are exactly where they need to be.”

Please do not worry about where your children will be when we return. So much can, and will, happen before then. Your children will have enjoyed a prolonged period of time with you that they would not have had without the lockdown; they will have laughed, played, baked, cycled, drawn, painted and done all sorts of wonderful things with you that they will be able to share with us all in due course. For now, please just keep them safe, keep them happy, and the rest will be picked up when they return.

I have loved seeing some of the fantastic home learning (planned and unplanned, curricular and extra-curricular) that has been taking place this week – I cannot wait to share some of it with you on Friday! Thank you so much to those of you who have sent in your photos - it is so lovely to see the children. We all miss them all very much!

Kind regards

Tina Holditch