

Rothwell Schools

Rothwell Journal

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Home Learning Special Edition!

Welcome back to the latest issue of the Rothwell Journal! It is hard to believe that we are already at the end of January and find ourselves settled into a different pattern of schooling again as a result of the national lockdown. As you are aware school remains open for the children of critical workers and we have seen a big increase in the numbers of children attending this time, which is much higher than in the previous lockdown last Spring. As a result, some of the year groups that we have in school are now full, this is to limit the possible chains of transmissions and contacts alongside the levels of available staffing we have. Thank you for those who are only using the provision when needed.

For pupils who are learning at home we have now in place our Remote Learning offer which is based on the Pathfinder Schools principles for remote learning. For children in Years 1-6 this is supported using Microsoft Teams and will involve access to a series of learning tasks alongside some live sessions with the class teacher. The Department for Education has prescribed that schools must provide the equivalent of 3 hours learning a day for KS1 pupils (Years 1-2) and the equivalent of 4 hours learning a day for KS2 pupils (Years 3-6) with an expectation this continues to be ambitious for pupils and ideally follows the curriculum that would be offered in school.

What is our remote learning approach for Years 1-6?

- The use of Microsoft Teams which can be accessed on any device with a web browser e.g. laptops, tablets, mobile phones, games consoles and smart tvs.
- A series of daily assignments that can be accessed using Microsoft Teams. These can be completed on a device or undertaken on plain paper/books from the bee hives (photographed and returned back to us).
- The ability to interact live with the class teacher on a daily basis and raise any support queries during daily help slots on the class message board. The daily morning session introduces the learning for the day, includes stories, games, opportunities to share and socialise with class mates as well as address any learning points from the day before.
- Recorded Phonics videos are also being provided for Years 1 and 2 pupils reflecting the sessions that would be delivered in school.
- Providing feedback to pupils from teachers and teaching assistants on most key assignments. Identifying next steps where relevant.
- Using lessons which involve pre-recorded elements of teaching so for pupils sharing devices these can be accessed at different times.
- Providing a weekly timetable so families are aware of the types of activities coming up across the week and ensuring that any assignments are posted at 5pm the evening before so families can plan accordingly.
- Ensure continued access to stationery items in school through our bee hive provision which are open daily.
- The dynamics of the changing curriculum and the high number of pupils on roll mean it is not practical for us to be able to provide weekly printed resources to over 700 pupils. The remote learning approach is the model adopted across all Pathfinder Schools and is encouraged by the DfE.



How will we be developing this further over the next few weeks for Year 1-6?

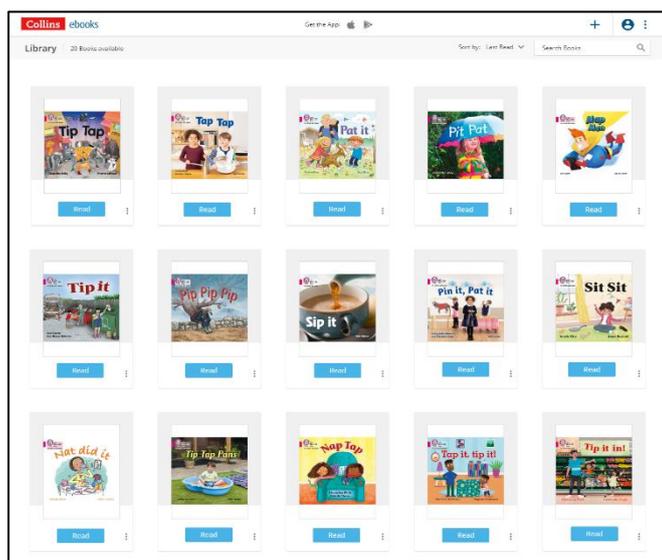
- Continuing to develop the learning assignments linked to our new curriculum topics; these will be more balanced to ensure a focus at least one day a week on tasks that do not need to be completed solely on screen or in books such as baking, nature activities.
- Introducing the option for teaching staff to run 1:1 sessions with pupils on dedicated support teams where appropriate. We have now begun a trial of this with pupils in Y3 Maple and Y1 Owl classes.

What is our remote learning approach for children in EYFS?

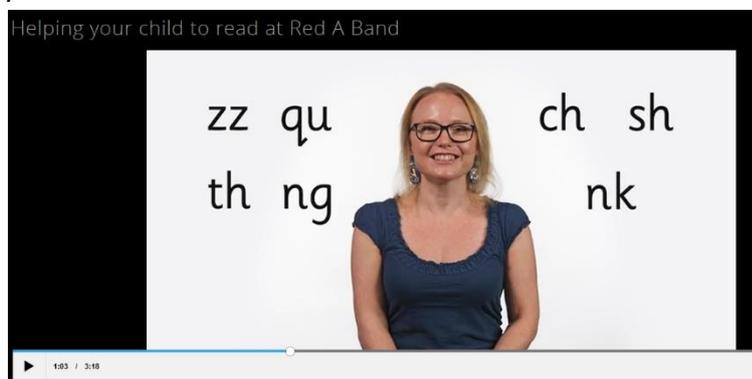
- Our approach for EYFS (Nursery and Reception) children is still built on the EYFS curriculum and involves many active and practical approaches to the curriculum. As a result, parents are emailed home a weekly bank of ideas to undertake with the children and upload photographs back to Evidence Me. This forms part of your child's development profile and feedback is given on all submissions from a member of the Reception Team. Please contact the school office if you are not able to access your Evidence Me account.
- For Reception we are producing daily phonics and number time teaching YouTube videos where the children can follow along with Mrs Barber and Mrs Druce-Jones reflecting the sessions that would be delivered in school. These links are sent home daily via email.
- We are also holding daily story time sessions with your child's class teacher on Zoom, these links are sent home daily via email and it is brilliant to see so many families taking part in these.

New Reading Resources

We will soon be providing access to a brand-new virtual reading library from Collins called Collins Big Cat E-books. Every child in the school will have access to their own bookshelf with titles appropriate to their reading ability. These will be set by the child's class teacher and we would encourage your child to read each book 2-3 times to develop fluency. The E-books platform will be able to work on any device with a browser as well as being available to download as a free app in the Apple App Store <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/collins-ebooks/id1007196515> and Google Play Store https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.harpercollins.collinsebooks&hl=en_GB&gl=US. Each child will be issued with a unique login which will be sent home with a parent letter shortly.



Phonics based books will be available linked to our reading bands and phonics groups. These will also contain videos for parents to show how you can help your child to read at home.



How to help your child engage with learning at home?

We understand that learning at home with your child is very different to learning at school and this brings many challenges for families. We as staff do understand how tricky this situation is as many of us are trying to balance our own family commitments alongside our work, so please don't worry as we have tried to make the remote learning as flexible as possible. We are, as a school, being asked to monitor the levels of engagement in learning and we will be reaching out to offer support in many forms to families. We have a virtual coffee morning for parents on Friday 5th Feb at 10am on Remote Learning, please call the school office for joining details.

Here are some top tips to help with your learning at home:

- Using the timetable provided and pick a session from timetable that your child will enjoy to ease them into their learning for the day or get them engaging on the daily session with their teachers and friends.
- Look at the tasks ahead for the day and give your child a choice about the order that they complete them in. Set up a visual schedule that helps your child see what is coming up.
- Remember to attempt tasks in small chunks/bursts, build in brain breaks away for a few minutes from the work/screen to help your child focus when they return.
- Build in a reward for your child attempting or completing a task. Learning is not just about the end product but what they have learnt along the way.
- Remember to reach out and ask the teacher/teaching assistants on the message boards if you are not sure or need help.
- Find an area in the house that is suitable for learning and help to create a special learning space with your child. Where possible stick to your child's normal school routine.
- Encourage them to be independent, you may introduce a task but step away whilst they try parts on their own.
- Fit the schedule around your own family life and work commitments.
- Why not try a free training course on Microsoft Teams:

The training will give a broad understanding of how you can support your children.

You will be introduced to:

- Accessing the Office portal
- Navigating with Teams
- Class Teams: communication within, file management, assignment and meetings

Please register for the free training from the tablet academy here:

<https://learn.tablet-academy.com/courses/microsoft-teams-for-parents/>

1:1 sessions

As part of our trial around 1:1 sessions we have added in our additional guidelines that we will be using:

- These will be conducted on Microsoft Teams for pupils in Year 1-6 and Zoom for EYFS pupils
- These sessions can only be scheduled by a staff member
- The child's video must be switched on and the session will be recorded as part of our safeguarding procedures and in line with our staff code of conduct.
- Each child will be allocated a private channel as part of a separate support team and any recordings will be within here and expire after 21 days
- All sessions will have a learning focus

Online Safety

As we are all spending more time at home and on the internet we thought it maybe useful to pinpoint the resources that are available to support families on the Lockdown hub from the NSPCC and Net Aware [Online safety in lockdown \(net-aware.org.uk\)](https://www.net-aware.org.uk). This site contains information about how to use parental controls on your child's gaming device and tips to keep your child safe online.



Let's keep kids safe online

Staff Changes



A big congratulations to Miss Wallace and her partner Dave on the birth of their new baby boy George. Shortly after Miss Wallace started maternity leave George decided to make an early appearance. We are sure you will join us in wishing Miss Wallace well with her new arrival. We have now made arrangements for two new teachers to share the teaching responsibility of the Robin class. Mrs Reynolds (an experienced RVIS teacher) returned this week to teach the Robin class on Wednesday afternoon to Friday. She will be supporting in school when needed and interacting with the children online in the Robin's class team. Another teacher will be supporting the class on a Monday to Wednesday morning, she is still undergoing her pre-employment checks and we will share her details with you shortly.

Due to a change in family circumstances we recently said goodbye to Mrs Jones who was part of our cleaning team at the Infant school who helped to keep our Nursery and Nest building so clean; we would like to Mrs Jones all the best for the future.

Today also sees the final day at RVIS for Mrs Gee, Y2 teaching assistant who has been part of the Rothwell Schools for a number of years. Mrs Gee is moving away with her family to start a new chapter in her life on the coast and we would like to wish them all well for their new adventure. We would like to say a big thank you to Mrs Gee for all the support she has given to lots of children and staff during her time with us. We know Ted, our school dog will miss her companionship on his regular dog walks alongside many of the children.

Children's Mental Health Week

Next week we are encouraging children to join in with the Children's Mental Health Week. The theme of this year's Children's Mental Health Week is Express Yourself.

Expressing yourself is about finding ways to share feelings, thoughts, or ideas, through creativity. It is about finding a way to show who you are, and how you see the world, that can help you feel good about yourself.

As parents and carers, you play an important role in your child's mental health. You can check out free resources to support on [Parents and Carers - Children's Mental](#)

[Health Week 2021](#).

We suggest that children take the chance to be creative in expressing thoughts, feelings and ideas through music, dance, writing, poetry, art, cooking...the list is endless and we would love to them shared next week on their class channel ready for Friday's assembly. The "great wave" is similar to the rainbows a few months ago; create a cut out of a waving hand and stick it in your window for all to see.

Songwriting Course

We'd like to let you know that the Northamptonshire Cultural Education Partnership, together with South Northants Borough Council and NMPAT, are running a special and very exciting songwriting project over the half-term holiday. The project is FREE and available to ANY young person aged 7 to 12 living in Northamptonshire. The sessions will take place every morning, online on Zoom, from Monday 15th February through to Friday 19th February. Each session will last an hour.

The project is being led by singer and songwriter, Sophie Garner, and part of her Creative Songwriting Journal initiative. For the week, Sophie will be joined by some of NMPAT's very own musicians.

Pupils would need to register their interest at: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/ncep-songwriting-project-with-sophie-garner-tickets-137927991335> Places are limited so it is important to book up early.