

Friday 29 January 2021

Good Evening Parents and Carers of Sabden Primary,

As we leave another week of partial opening of school and home learning I just wanted to catch up with you all.

By now the novelty of another lockdown may well and truly have evaporated, it certainly has with me. Staff at school have found this week particularly challenging and it seems so hard to be motivated, a feeling I know many of you are feeling too.

I understand your frustrations and anxiety during this time but please know that staff at Sabden are on your side and feel that you all have committed fantastically well to the home learning. You are not teachers, you are parents being asked to do an incredibly difficult job on top of an already incredibly difficult job as a parent. You may be startled by your child's concentration, ability or focus to name a few worries but please don't worry, it's not like this in school. I trained for 4 years to become a teacher, with another 'probationary' year on top of that. I learnt about special needs, how to teach, how to observe and give feedback, how to spot safeguarding issues. I learned about behaviour, both low level and extremely challenging. Over the years I have perfected my teacher stare which could turn a grown man to tears and yet my own child (I stopped at 1) wasn't top of the class or got certificates on repeat and regularly got told off at school. I can't even talk about getting him to do his homework, the trauma is still so fresh some 15 years later.

So we get it. We understand. Just do what you can. We all have days when it's a non-starter.

Free School Meals

Hopefully everyone will have received their vouchers by now. We haven't had any concerns so are assuming all is working well.

Food Bank

If anyone is struggling during this time and would find a bag of food helpful please email Mrs Maskell at head@sabden.lancs.sch.uk . All correspondence will be confidential and only on a need to know basis.

In school provision

In school provision is only for Critical Workers and those children who are deemed vulnerable by either the Government or school.

The message from the Government is that even if you are a Critical Worker your child should only come to school if absolutely necessary so please re-consider if there are any times your child could be at home.

We are currently working with 42% of children on roll coming into school. If further requests are made to attend school we may have to become much stricter with who we can offer a place to and maybe even take back some places.

Staff Wellbeing

As a Headteacher I not only have the welfare of our lovely pupils to plan for and consider but as an employer must ensure that my staff remain fit and healthy and are working within reasonable timeframes and have a reasonable workload. All staff at Sabden are committed and dedicated but some have been putting in 12 hour days for the children aswell as home schooling their own children, just like many of you.

It is for this reason that I have made some changes to the online learning expectation which I hope you agree will make things a little easier for our staff.

Online learning

Just a few changes to let you know about.

Teachers are continuing with their live, daily zoom calls but these will be shorter, about 30 minutes from now on. However, the activities children are asked to do in the morning (English and Maths) need to be uploaded to Class Dojo by 12.30pm. EYFS and KS1 children at home will have an adult with them, or at least in the house, to help and KS2 children are more than able to download their own work. The earlier download time is so that teachers can mark and give some feedback during the afternoon.

If learning and activities are put on Class Dojo for the afternoon it will not be marked.

For those children in school their learning will not be downloaded.

Online Reading

Today I have bought a whole school subscription for online reading books with Oxford Owls. I will send out passwords etc as soon as they are sent over.

I thought I had done this for the first lockdown last March but realise that I only subscribed to the free books! Apologies. Over the next few days the ebooks will be processed and you should have access to over 600 more books for your children to continue their reading journeys.

Back to School

You will all know about the possible return to school announced by Mr Johnson a few days ago. I have not received any further information but as soon as I hear anything I will let you know and school will start making arrangements for their return.

I wish you all a good weekend

Best wishes

Elizabeth Maskell

Headteacher, Sabden Primary School