

YELLOW CLASS SPRING TERM 2021 *(in and out of school)*

Dear Yellow families,

Well, here we are again! I know things are far from normal but we are coming at this lockdown in a much stronger position in a way. I can already feel from the contact I have had with many of you, that things are different. As a working parent, I really empathise with how challenging this situation is, so I will do everything I can to support you. Please don't fret. There is no sense of competition, every family is different, we all have to do what we have to do. Please try not to subscribe to the notion of children falling behind. Our primary concern is that the children retain their **love of learning** whether they are at home or in school as a child of a critical worker. We are under no illusion of the best ways that children learn but for now we have to do the best we can. I hope that the offer for Yellow class children will capture a bit more of normal class life this time round. I have outlined below some key principles and ideas that hopefully will make our expectations clearer and help all of us make the most of this tricky time.

LEARNING EXPECTATIONS	The children in school are expected to do the same activities as those children learning at home. Everyday there will be tasks to complete: a Maths activity, a phonics/spelling/grammar activity and a topic activity normally linked to English. There will sometimes be other activities suggested that are optional and to be enjoyed! (apologies now for the 'ear worm' songs that I have suggested!)
TIME	The pace of learning is very different at home for obvious reasons. However, the pace in school in these times is also different- the groups are smaller and sometimes are mixed ages. I have tried to set activities that are manageable and that sometimes can be completed independently. This is how we work at school normally. It may take different children different amounts of time to complete a task- this is normal too. The main thing is that the children sustain interest and enthusiasm. If your child is getting tired, take a break- you know your child best. If you find that tasks are taking a long time (and your child isn't enjoying it) or indeed completing tasks too quickly, please let me know.
EVIDENCE FROM HOME	Ideally, contact from you once or twice a week would enable me to offer some feedback and encouragement. Please don't put yourselves under pressure. Photographs of the work that children are particularly proud of are always welcomed. Likewise, videos are always a useful way of seeing how they are getting on. Please keep all their work in a folder or book if you can. Apart from anything else it is an amazing piece of history! From Monday I will leave out a box of exercise books that you can pop by and collect for your child. Everything can then be kept/stuck in to this. Feel free to decorate it. If you have one you are using already that is great too!
CHILD CONTACT WITH CLASS TEACHERS	My aim is for your children to see my face and hear my voice everyday in one form or another. This will be a mix of videos, Zoom calls or indeed phone calls to check in if we haven't heard from you for a while. There may of course be days that I can't manage this but I know from Lockdown 1 that this was something many of you felt was missing. We now have procedures in place to help facilitate this so I hope this will improve our offer and help you to engage the children in the learning. You will appreciate that being in school with key worker groups and also managing home contact is a challenge so we will keep the manageability of this under constant review..
IN-SCHOOL GROUPS	As you will no doubt appreciate, the structure of groups in school is subject to change as the situation develops. For the first week, we have kept children in their class bubbles with class teachers. However, this will change for some year groups from Monday 11th January. All children in school will still get the same work set as those at home and will still be in contact with their teachers.
CONTACT WITH YOU	We really welcome and appreciate your feedback – particularly if you are struggling. This is not at an easy time. <i>We do ask though that you recognise we are up against it more than ever so you may not get responses to emails the same day we read them.</i> <i>The only exception to this is if you have a positive Covid test result that would require us to immediately contact and close a bubble in school. Please use the dedicated email positive@westchiltschool.com for that.</i>

Thank you once again for all your support and positivity. I am so grateful we are going through this again together whether you are at home or school. It helps already knowing you and your families well.

Take care all of you.

Jemma x