

# Friars Primary School & Nursery

Part of the Portico Academy Trust

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**PORTICO**  
ACADEMY TRUST

opening doors, unlocking potential

**CEO – Mrs C. Woolf**

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

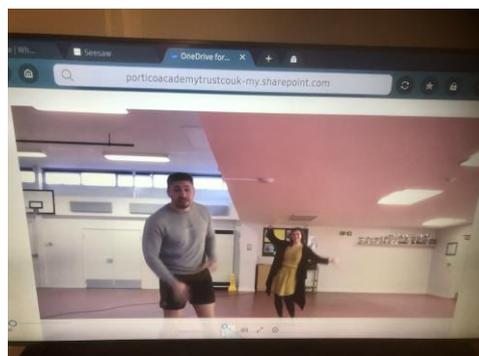
Well, we have made it to the end of the first week of home learning and despite some early teething problems the week has been a big success. Thank you to those parents that have shared their feedback with us over the course of the week, it is appreciated and we are sure that things will improve even further in weeks to follow.

### **Technology issues this week**

Unfortunately, the reliability of internet connection both in school and at home is largely out of our control especially with so many networks being overloaded at the moment due to the sheer number of pupils trying to get online. Our IT support have worked tirelessly this week to try and boost some of the connection points in specific areas around our school to ensure our teachers have the best possible connection at all times.

We have also been made aware that some children have experienced problems viewing the screens that are shared by teachers during their live lessons. Unfortunately, it seems as if this is simply down to the wide variety of individual devices being used, the compatibility with the programmes and the specific settings on each. Of course, with the huge reliance on technology during this lockdown, we need to find a 'best fit' and there will undoubtedly be some devices that handle this better than others. Without seeing each individual device, which is of course not possible, we are unable to give any more specific advice at the moment although our IT support are continuing to look into these issues and we will let you know if any fixes are found.

If you are struggling to find enough devices for the children to work on, we believe that devices such as Xboxes and smart TVs that give internet access can be used to access Seesaw and view the live and recorded lessons via Teams. This may help to relieve a bit of the tension around sharing devices. We have also today received our limited number of laptops that will be given out next week to eligible, disadvantaged children.



Here is a photo of Mr. Webster, our very own Joe Wicks, and our lovely Mrs James in one of our 'keep fit' sessions, watched through a TV.

Our teachers would like to say a HUGE thank you to all of the adults who have been helping their children at home and working through technical challenges as they arise. We really appreciate everyone's support.

### **Exercise books**

To help children record their work as accurately as possible, we have made exercise books available for collection. These will be boxed in year groups and can be found in our office reception area from 9:00am on Monday. Please come through the double doors to the office and find your year group box. Nursery children will have a plain book to collect and year groups from Reception to Year 6 will have a squared maths book and a lined writing book to collect. **Please only take one of each.** More books will be made available as necessary. When entering the school please make sure that you sanitise your hands, wear a face covering and that you socially distance from any other parents who may be collecting.

### **Work on Seesaw**

Due to limited space on the platform, the daily work and lessons that are set on Seesaw will only remain live for one week after their original date, after which they will be removed. Please bear this in mind, if your child is accessing work with the intention of catching up any missed lessons.

### **Pupil Assessment Tests**

You may have heard this week that the Department for Education has announced that there will be no Key Stage 1 or 2 SATs or Year 1 Phonics checks this year. With the current climate, we feel this is a sensible decision. We will instead rely solely on the expertise of our teacher assessment to assess the children at each of these stages.

Our first celebration assembly went out this afternoon and while it is sad that we cannot see the children in person, it was lovely to share some of the success stories from this week. To reiterate one of the 'shout outs' from our assembly, a huge well done to all of the children that have accessed their learning this week, it has been lovely to see so many of you and a big thank you to all of the parents and carers that have helped to support the children at home.

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation and have a good weekend.

Yours sincerely,



Mr. S. Roche  
Vice Principal