HOLLY PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL 20th April 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Firstly, we would like to say that we hope that you are your extended families are keeping healthy. We have all been well and we are looking forward to getting back into more of a routine after the Easter holidays.

We do not know when schools will be reopened. We watch the news daily for updates. As soon as we know, Mrs Pelham will be in touch. We know that we will be at home for the next three weeks at least. We will continue to phone you to check if you are OK. We managed to speak to almost everyone before the holidays. There were a couple of you that we rang but there was no answer so hopefully, we will catch up in the next couple of weeks.

We wanted to write to explain our thinking about the home learning that we will be giving over the next three weeks. We will be starting our new Learning Project, which is called ‘Our Wonderful World’. We will be focusing on the animals and plants that are living on the planet with us.

READING

We will be continuing to send a Bug Club book each week. The books are chosen to reflect the phonics that the children have already learnt at school. The books also introduce new ways of writing some sounds eg ai ay a-e a . Please try to make sure your child is reading these books at least three times a week. This will help to develop their quick recognition of phonemes and key words, their fluency and pace, their understanding of what they have read and finally, their confidence. If they are finding it difficult, use the ‘Read to Me’ button at the bottom of the page. Encourage them to listen to each page, one at a time before they try to read it for themselves. They can also listen to it and try to read alongside at the same time.

LITERACY

We have planned a series of lessons, just as we would if the children were at school. We have selected a key text that the learning will be based around. Initially, this will be The Snail and the Whale. We have tried to include some handwriting and some grammar too. Please encourage your children to form their letters correctly then they are writing; a formation was sent to you when the school closed a few weeks ago.

MATHS

Before the holidays, we gave activities to practise concepts that we had already taught at school. Now, we are going to move into concepts that we have not yet taught. We will try to make it as easy as possible but the children will need adult support. We know that this is going to be difficult for some families; we appreciate that many of you are working from home and that most of you are not teachers. We will try our best to be clear. We will give instructions for what the children need to learn, sometimes we might be able to show a video clip and give a follow-up activity for the children to try. Some of the time, it will be easier to give a sheet. You do not have to print the sheet, if you can talk to your child about their thinking - that would be perfect. On the sheets, you will often see this symbol. This means that the children should use something to help them to work out the answers, eg cubes, Lego, stones etc. At school, we encourage children to use resources to work out their maths at all times (this will continue until Year 6!) so please encourage your children to do the same.

FOUNDATION SUBJECTS

In this section of the National Curriculum we teach many subjects (Science, History, Geography, Art, DT, Music, PE, Computing, RE and PSHE) and we will try to give a mixture of them for home learning. Our Learning Project mainly focuses on animals and plants as well as thinking about different countries of the world where different animals live so we will mainly be focusing on geography and science.

There are many other activities available online (too many – it’s quite mind blowing). You might find something different that your children are interested in and would prefer to do. Please do what suits you and your family. Ideally, we would like the children to keep up with their reading as this is a skill that is transferable to the rest of the curriculum.

We appreciate that there are many difficulties in the present situation. We are all parents as well, trying to combine working at home with home-schooling. We understand that you might be sharing your laptop, have limited internet access, have no paper or other resources. We are trying to think of ideas that use resources that most families will have in their homes. We believe that Year One children learn best when they are motivated; this happens when activities are fun and practical. We are trying to think of activities that put the least amount of stress onto families. If you are unable to complete the learning, please don’t worry. All teachers will be working hard when we are back at school to make sure your children are prepared for their future learning. Please focus on keeping yourselves and your children happy, safe and healthy during this time.

With very best wishes

Emma Fitzpatrick, Xenoulla Thrasyvoulou and Sharon Casey