



Weekly Newsletter

29th January 2021

News from Sleights

It is hard to believe that next week sees the start of February! Whilst Christmas does seem somewhat of a distant memory, it also feels like the last few weeks have raced ahead.

Once again, we have seen a mixed bag of strange weathers throughout the week. This has not deterred any of you, our hardworking families, in making sure that the children at home are happy and safe. Again, we have heard so many excellent tales of learning at home, described in the many and varied ways that it can be accomplished. Your dedication and determination is superb and, as a full staff, we take our hats off to you all and commend your brilliant work – well done!

Of course, our children have shown us again this week that they can rise to the challenges of home learning. We have seen a huge host of achievements, each celebrated and recognised. We look forward to being able to celebrate these achievements in person with the children when we are all back together again.

I want to reiterate our key message again. Lockdown and learning at home has come and (one day) will go. As families, the role of a school teacher is one that has been thrust on you all, with very short notice, so please **do make sure you are being kind to yourselves**. The job you are all doing is a magnificent one. For me personally, keeping your children and families safe is **the** priority during these times.

As a school community, I know that we all look forward to the return of days we are more used to. When this happens, we will work tirelessly to address any learning worries, or recover topics that the children may need some help with. We already have clear plans in place, ready to put into action when we can. But for now, stay happy and safe.

We are always here, if you need us. Have a restful weekend with your families.

Scott Grason, Headteacher
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When will school reopen for all children?

After the announcement from Boris Johnson this week, the first possible date for a return to school is 8th March. We know that this may seem some time away, but also understand that more time is needed to allow the number of Covid infections to fall substantially. The return to school will be in staggered phases, just like the June 2020 return. Whilst we do not know anymore at this stage, we will continue to keep our families up to speed with our plans.

February half term

School will close for half term on 12th February. During the half term break, no work will be set on Tapestry and instead, we are asking our children and families to have a well deserved break!

Celebrating learning at home

Tapestry, emails and telephone contact with you all this week has put a spotlight onto so much brilliant home learning.

- Homes and houses have been on the learning menu this week. Some of our Explorers have been sharing pictures of their homes, as well as carrying out hunts for textures, shapes and colours around the house. Children have also enjoyed building homes with lots of boxes and paint.
- Pioneers have been thinking about animals this week – something we know the children enjoy! We have seen and heard about lots of writing at home too, with children using their phonics to help them write animal names. It's been lovely to hear about families hunting for animal footprints when out on their walks too!
- Our Learners and Adventurers have been busy star gazing this week. In school, it has been great to see children creating their own telescopes and I know that this has been a popular task for some children at home too! Some of our families have been busy finding out about constellations and spent time looking in the night sky to find these.
- Discoverers and Leaders have also been studying the night sky and creating descriptions of it. Mrs Taylor and Mrs Walker have been very impressed by everyone's hard work and efforts. Lots of our Leaders have been involved once again making meals at home, continuing their food theme, whilst Discoverers have been musical instrument makers!
- Again, we have also heard and seen so many other learning opportunities taking place at home. I have really loved seeing and being able to wave at some of you from my window when out on your walks. We have also seen families working together to build dens, create their own games, lots of reading, enjoy birthday cake, create meals and cakes for families, write fact files and so much more. All simply stunning. Well done Team Sleights for excellent learning at home!

A message from our Governors

I wanted to write on behalf of the full governing body today to thank you all for your continued hard work, brilliant dedication and support to home learning. Governors met with Mr Grason earlier in the week to discuss the school's remote learning and we were blown away to hear of the amazing work taking place at home. Whether this is following our school curriculum, or your own, what is clear is that once again, our wonderful Sleights' families are doing a simply brilliant job. We know that it isn't always easy, but on behalf of the governing body, we want to thank you all for what you are doing and recognise your commitment and hard work. You are all amazing.

Gemma Kelleman, Chair of Governors.

Covid-19 Staff Testing

Just a reminder that staff at Sleights will now be taking part in twice weekly lateral flow testing. These tests are to identify asymptomatic cases of Covid-19 in the community and are a government drive to continue fighting infection rates. The test kits were delivered this week and are being rolled out to staff. School staff will self-administer lateral flow tests at home regularly. This may impact upon our key worker provision in school if staff test positive, but we will inform families as soon as possible if this is the case.

Checking in – a reminder

Thank you to you all for registering safely from home. Just a reminder to email us each day, please. Lots of families are choosing to reply to the 10.30am* reminder text. If this works best for you, it is OK to register like this too!



Sundry Champions

A big well done to the huge number of children who have spent time on Sundry this week. Our leader board has been an incredibly close call again this week.

After falling just short of the top position last week, I am delighted to crown our **DISCOVERERS** as this week's most active class. Well done to them. Leaders were incredibly close behind... I think next week's battle could be another close one!



The RSPB Big Garden Watch

Over the next few weeks, children and families at home may like to take part in the RSPB Big Garden Watch. With families taking walks and enjoying time together, now is a great time to take a few moments to also have a look at the different birds that might be visiting your garden.

A full lesson for the children has been put together (with details below) which families may choose to enjoy at home. Let's hope many of you see some exciting and interesting birds!

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/live-lessons/big-schools-winterwatch-live-lesson/zv8vn9q>

A focus on how we set activities for children when learning at home

Last week, I shared an update on how feedback is given to children working at home. Today, I wanted to share some of the key points about how teachers are planning work and activities for the children.

- The tasks set follow the National Curriculum, with each activity linking to a specific learning area that children need to know. These are revisited regularly throughout the children's time in school.
- The lessons being delivered in school match those being completed at home.
- As a group of staff, we carefully choose shared topics and themes, allowing for families to work as collaboratively as possible at home.
- Teachers are using a variety of ways and technology to bring lessons to life. You may have seen staff recorded lessons, using software to share screen, or links to other pre-recorded teaching input.
- Our big emphasis is on enabling family flexibility. We have consciously opted to avoid 'live lessons', as we know families are working around their own commitments each day and using our pre-recorded sessions at a time that works for them.

A big thank you to our hardworking teachers in school who are constantly adapting their own teaching approaches, as we battle through school closures. I think they are doing a super job!

Sleights is a nut free and peanut free school.