

Hopelands Preparatory School keeping children happy and learning during lockdown.

On the 4th January at 8pm, along with the rest of the nation, we heard the words that no one wanted to hear 'home schooling'! With minimal notice, plans had to be cancelled, businesses and schools were closed, parents hoped their home IT was up to the challenge and school staff aged a few years overnight.



Within a day, Hopelands Preparatory School teachers moved their lessons online and the virtual timetable, which had been developed to strengthen pupils' resilience and continue their passion for learning, was implemented. The timetable mirrors the school day and runs from 8.30-3.30. Every subject continues to be taught including art, DT, dance, French, PE, and music. The children attend the lessons, interact with their teachers, see their friends, ask questions, and receive feedback on their work. We know that home schooling can be both uninspiring and isolating, so having this interaction with teachers and peers is key to continuing the successful relationship the pupils have with our school. To date we have had an outstanding high engagement rate with our pupils through the virtual learning which we are incredibly proud of.

There are 10-minute breaks between each lesson as well as the longer morning and afternoon breaks and time for a healthy lunch. Children are encouraged to move away from the screen, run around outside or play with their siblings or toys.

Parents have both embraced and supported the timetable and have been instrumental in encouraging their children to carry on their love of learning. We have listened and acknowledged their feedback as it is important for us to understand how we can further support our families through these difficult times.

Feedback from Hopelands Parents:

- 'I am amazed and grateful for how well the online learning appears to be working and a credit to all those involved in accomplishing this. Thank you. Our son is certainly more comfortable with the experience this time round, if still a little reluctant to open his camera! Tomorrow morning's music session might sort that out as he presents his violin and a short piece of music!'
- 'We have been blown away by how brilliant you have all been this term, and prior to this lockdown. It is evident there has been a huge amount of work going on behind the scenes preparing for a possible lock down, but to roll out a full online timetable for all 6 classes with 24 hours' notice is incredible! The communication has been fantastic, both from you all in the office, but also from all the teachers keeping us updated with lesson plans. We were very impressed with how the class teacher adjusted her teaching plans considering feedback from some of the parents, adapting content and providing resources such that classes could be carried out off-line if that was the parents' preference. She has also been brilliant these last two days managing on-line teaching and 4 students in class. We are reminded, yet again, how pleased we are that we decided to send our child to Hopelands.... as before in the previous lockdown, the 'I can, I will, I do' attitude shines through.'
- 'We just wanted to say how pleased and impressed we are with the provision of teaching during the lockdown. It's great to see how well the children and teachers can work together remotely.'

Our doors remain open for all our key worker and vulnerable children and the staff in school are continuing to drive the Hopelands positive ethos:

- 'Just wanted to say what a fantastic job you and the rest of the staff are doing. The Government really did spring it on everyone this time, but it has been incredibly smooth and well organised. Both my children really enjoyed the school experience yesterday, so thank you.'

We know it is early days, and we recognise how tough it is with challenging news being broadcast, but we are super proud of our community. Across the nation people are rising to the challenge, but with everything being turned upside down, we recognise the true difficulties and frustrations of home schooling. We are all doing our best and there is no right or wrong way. To finish in the words of our Head Teacher, Mrs Bradburn, taken from a letter to the Hopelands families:

'I would like to offer you some reassurance. Even though this is the second time around for this situation, if you feel like it is difficult or you are not doing something the right way, you are not the only one. There is no manual or answer book to how to manage your family during a situation like this, so we must all



use our best judgement. Sometimes a dog walk, a Lego build, some baking, or a relaxed film on the sofa might be the right thing to do for your child. This is ok. If you feel you need to ask a question of us, please do so - you will probably not be the first to ask it! Finally, please remember that we are here for you and your children and that has not changed; we might not have all the answers and we might not be able to help with everything, but we can listen, and we can support as much as you need us to.'

To find out about how we can work with you and your child to provide affordable academic excellence please contact Mrs Compton on 01453 822164 or email scompton@hopelands.org.uk