



**Happy New Year to you all**, and thank you for your support, understanding and patience during what has been one of the most challenging starts to a new year that I can remember. You will recall that we made the difficult decision not to open schools on the Tuesday as planned; a decision which turned out to be most beneficial as the Government announced on Monday evening that schools would remain open to vulnerable children and children of critical workers only. As we are all working hard to reduce the transmission of this virus to protect the NHS and save lives, we appreciate those of you who have chosen to keep your children home and helped us to keep our pupil numbers manageable during this Tier 5 lockdown period. Thank you all.



**I hope that you have now had** the opportunity to engage with the remote learning opportunities that your school is offering. NPAT teachers and support staff are working tirelessly to educate children in school and at home working remotely, and we really appreciate any support that you are able to offer to your child at this time. If you are having any difficulties engaging with this please do let your school know as our expectation is that ALL children will continue to learn during this lockdown period. We are keen to support families who are finding this a challenge. We appreciate that, for some of you, this may mean juggling the use of devices between children, limited internet access or managing your own home working at the same time. Thank you for persevering with this and supporting your children to continue their valuable education as much as possible, and please do contact your school if you need to.

**We have been working hard** behind the scenes to encourage our school meal provider, Dolce, to provide higher quality food hampers for families until the national voucher scheme is up and running again. We share your frustrations that these hampers have not always been good enough, and will move to the voucher scheme again as soon as we are able. In the meantime, please remember that it is not the schools themselves who are preparing the hampers, and that they are actually fighting on your behalf for them to be improved.

**Finally, please continue to help us to keep our children, families and staff safe** by staying at home as much as you can, washing your hands before you enter the school sites, wearing face coverings whilst on site, and remaining socially distanced from other households at all times. Thank you all for your support, and stay safe.

Julia Kedwards, **Chief Executive Officer**

**Christmas 2020: NPAT staff worked especially hard** this year to make sure the children were able to get into the festive spirit, without breaking the then Tier 2 rules or exposing the children to any additional risk. Santa still came to visit to remind the children there was still a chance to make his 'good behaviour list' but this time around he wore gloves, his beard covered his nose (and the mask underneath!) and like everyone else he practiced social distancing. He is shown here visiting the children of Upton Meadows who also made the most of a beautiful winter day by holding outdoor carols in their bubbles complete with the school's own brass band.



**It is been an annual tradition** for Weston Favell's St Peter's CoE church to host NPAT children for their magical 'Experience Christmas' exploration of the nativity story. While it was not possible for the event to take place this year, the aptly named Holly Tree class made a socially distanced visit to the church and were very excited to live stream their visit back to the children in school and those learning at home.

Another much loved tradition at WFPS is for the children to pay a Christmas visit to residents at their local retirement home, St John's. This Christmas, staff and residents were serenaded from their windows with some beautiful carol singing from Year 6 children.

Well done year 6 for putting lots of smiles on faces!



## A message from Anna Carter, NPAT Trust Lead for Curriculum and Professional Learning

**Staff across all of our schools** were looking forward to welcoming your children back to school at the start of term however, as you are all aware were unable to do so due to the National Lockdown. Instead they have all worked incredibly hard to welcome back children of critical workers and those who are vulnerable. In order to do so safely risk assessments have been updated and staffing organised accordingly.

**Due to the dedication of teachers and school leaders**, the vast majority of schools have already been delivering remote education where it has been needed, continually improving their provision in line with expectations and emerging best practice. Schools have a duty to provide remote education for state-funded, school-age children. The Department for Education (DfE) produced guidance for schools as to what remote education should look like for children including the minimum amount of time children should be spending engaged in this activity. The remote education provided should be equivalent in length to the core teaching pupils would receive in school and will include both recorded or live direct teaching time, and time for pupils to complete tasks and assignments independently. The amount of remote education provided should be, as a minimum: • Key Stage 1: 3 hours a day on average across the cohort, with less for younger children • Key Stage 2: 4 hours a day. Our Education Team in the Trust are working with schools to ensure that their remote provision meets the guidance laid out by the DfE. We meet (virtually of course!) regularly with the Remote Education Leads to collaborate and share best practice.

**Schools are usually very active places** with PE, break times and the journeys to and from school. Being active can be a challenge for children during lockdown and your schools will be providing ideas of how to combat this – especially at this time of year.

**Despite the challenges of lockdown and remote education** we also look forward to the day when we welcome all children back into school. We continue to develop our curriculum materials for this time and work with teachers and subject leaders to ensure children receive the highest quality of education.



**As we are near completion of week two** of lockdown with schools now mandated by the government to provide specified amounts of learning a day, much of it online, families across the country are struggling with insufficient data or broadband for their child(ren) to be able access their classwork. In response, major network providers have released support packages to help families out with costs. Children with access to a mobile phone on one of the following networks might be able to benefit: EE, O2, Sky Mobile, SMARTY, Tesco Mobile, Three, Virgin Mobile, Vodafone and other providers may join the scheme at a later stage. Vodafone, Three and BT offer free data and unlimited broadband for children studying at home

**How to get help:** If your home-learners need extra data to access their study please visit [Get-help-with-tech.education.gov.uk](https://www.get-help-with-tech.education.gov.uk) for further information and then get in touch with your school. It would be helpful to have the following information to hand when you call: the name of the account holder, the number of the mobile device, the mobile network of that device (for example Three).

**Coming up:** EE, O2, Three and Vodafone are planning free access to the Oak National Academy online lessons (see right column), so that families can continue to learn from home without using any of their mobile data allowance until the end of the academic year. The networks are completing their technical tests over the coming weeks before they can roll this out.

Top tip! If you have a PlayStation or Xbox both Microsoft Teams and Google Classroom can be accessed via the consoles.

**BBC**

**BBC TV is helping children** to keep up with their studies and relieving families where demand on limited amounts of technology is high, by broadcasting lessons on BBC Two and CBBC, as well as online, with apps also available on Android and iOS. The primary age programmes, which will be broadcast on CBBC from 09:00 every day, will include *BBC Live Lessons* and *BBC Bitesize Daily* as well as *Our School*, *Celebrity Supply Teacher*, *Horrible Histories* and *Operation Ouch*. For more information [Click here](#)



**OAK  
NATIONAL  
ACADEMY**

**Established in April 2020** as a rapid response to the first national lockdown, Government backed Oak National Academy is a new collection of high-quality lessons and online resources created by actual teachers. Their online classroom offers free access to great teachers, delivering video lessons, quizzes and worksheets. You can search for lessons by subject and year group, or follow their suggested weekly schedule. For more information visit [Oak](#)

## More useful free resources to help with remote learning

**Parentikind**

Bringing together home & school

[Click here](#) for a list of free resources



[Click here](#) for daily 'home learning' lessons for Years 1-9 with a short video showing you clearly and simply how to help your child complete the activity successfully.



[Click here](#) for drawing with *Rob Biddulph* a bestselling award-winning children's book author and illustrator. His site contains videos of how to draw more than 60 different child friendly staples including dragons, pirate ships and even Sonic the Hedgehog.

**Jane  
Considine  
Education**

Bestselling author and revered trainer of primary school English teaching, Jane Considine delivers live English lessons aimed at primary age children from 9:45am (GMT) on YouTube. [Click here](#) to learn more.

**VICIOUS  
VIKINGS**







# Ideas for keeping busy



**PE with Joe is back on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays @ 9 a.m. on YouTube.** If you missed out on the pleasure of starting your day with



Mr. Wicks in the first lockdown, now is your chance to join his millions of fans and perhaps kickstart that healthy new years resolution. While his indoor sessions are primarily aimed at children, parents report that *"There's something about the live stream and feeling you're doing the workouts with all the other families that is really motivational"*. Studies have also shown that children (and adults!) find it easier to concentrate and learn after exercise and that a *'single session of moderate physical activity has an acute benefit to brain function, cognition and scholastic performance in children'* according to the British Journal of Sports Medicine.



## Positive Parenting Project.

Co-founded by Anita Cleare, a parenting expert, writer, life-coach and very firm believer that there is no such thing as the perfect parent, the

*Thinking Parents Blog* has ideas on different things to do as a family, as well as tips on home working, mental health e.g. how best to talk to children about anxiety and stress, how to handle undesirable behaviour in children and an abundance of other useful resources.

[Click here](#)



**If wildlife is more your thing,** then check out the wide range of virtual zoos available in the UK and further afield.

London and Whipsnade [Click here](#)

Twycross [Click here](#)

Chester [Click here](#)

Edinburgh [Click here](#)



**And if you fancy something a bit more exotic...**

Monterey Bay Aquarium for sea otters, jellyfish, penguins and sharks [Click here](#)



Tembe Elephant Park [Click here](#)



**The benefits of a brisk walk** in the fresh air are well documented and perhaps never more needed than now with us all cooped up inside. Undoubtedly, motivation to brave the outdoors in January isn't the easiest to find, but locally run website site [northamptonshirewalks](#) offers inspiration in the form of hundreds of possible walks all across the county shared by lovers of walking. With an eye on present government guidance (at the time of writing: *"You may leave the home to: exercise with your household (or support bubble) or one other person, this should be limited to once a day, and you should not travel outside your local area."* but clarity is being sought on the actual distance permitted so please do check before you venture out!) this website has a special section devoted to *Walks from my doorstep* which enable you to stay local.



East Hunsbury residents should check out [Walk 2](#) and Walk 7, Walk 21 might appeal to those in the Upton area while Weston Favell area residents have lots of options. Check out the site's [Interactive Map](#) to begin your adventures. Best of all if your family gets the bug and enjoys a walk that hasn't already been logged, the site

will add it with the name of your choice.

For those little legs that need a bit of distraction in order to put in the miles, the Woodland Trust is the

site to visit: <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2021/01/lockdown-activities-kids-winter/>

Ideas include seasonal scavenger hunts, a free app to help you become a 'Tree Tracker' and ideas on how to bring nature indoors if the weather really is too bad to enjoyably venture out.



### Northampton Primary Academy Trust

Abington Vale Primary School, Blackthorn Primary School, Ecton Brook Primary School, East Hunsbury Primary School, Headlands Primary School, Lings Primary School, Rectory Farm Primary School, Simon de Senlis Primary School, Thorplands Primary School, Upton Meadows Primary School and in partnership with Weston Favell CE Primary School

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