



The Arthur Terry Learning Partnership
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Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

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Dear Parents and Carers from across our ATLP family of schools,

I do hope this letter finds you all safe and well. We are living in unprecedented times and, inevitably, we are all experiencing different challenges. Sadly, I know that some of you will have been directly affected by the current pandemic or know someone who has. Teachers and leaders at your child's school are still adapting to working in a very different way. You, as parents and carers, are adapting to having to live and work very differently.

For our families who are celebrating Ramadan, we wish them a very 'Happy Ramadan Kareem 2020'. We know that this year many friends and families will not be able to come together to celebrate in the usual way. Similarly, we understand that Eid-UI-Fitr will be very different as we continue to adhere to the government's social distancing guidance. Birmingham City Council has been working closely with Islamic leaders of the city and has published guidance on observing Ramadan and Eid during the COVID-19 outbreak. Please refer to the following link.

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/50231/coronavirus_covid-19/2168/ramadan_and_eid_2020

Some of our children will be scared right now. They will be hearing things on the television, hearing discussions in the household and many will be feeling tension and anxiety. They will all respond to this in different ways. When they learned that schools were going to be closed, they probably envisaged a school holiday full of fun. Instead, they are isolated at home and separated from their friends in a world that is alien to them and far away from their normal routines and structures.

We recognise that every child is different. We cannot and do not expect parents and carers to create a minute by minute learning schedule. We do not want to turn your kitchens or your living rooms into classrooms. More than ever, at this time, children need to be loved and feel comforted. In some cases this is more important than, for example, learning spellings or different types of soils. And that may mean that, on some days, you defer the planned learning schedule for another day. It may mean that, on some days, keeping in touch with their friends on-line is more important. This may mean that on some days being outside, getting fresh air via their daily exercise is more important. Learning comes in various guises: painting, baking, reading, jigsaws, even snuggling under a warm blanket and doing nothing!

You know your child better than anyone. But one thing that I know is that, at the end of all of this, your child's mental health and well-being will be more important than anything else. Gaps in knowledge can be filled, new learning will take place and schools will return to normal. Do not allow the present challenges to create arguments or conflict; how they feel during this time will remain with them for a long time after. Do not worry about their regressing in school; that is our job as school leaders, teachers and support staff to do what we know best when we are back in our school communities when we can. We know that children learn best when they feel happy, safe and nurtured. We truly value the strong relationships we have forged between you as parents and carers and between us we will protect our pupils and students, your loved ones, during these anxious times.

There are no right answers and no firm expectations. We will continue to provide work and signpost activities. Please do all you can but no more. Importantly, leaders at your child's school are still available to answer any questions they can, to signpost you to other support, where needed, and are continuing to do all they can to prioritise the needs of their school community.

Please do stay safe and look after each other.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Richard Gill', written in a cursive style.

Richard Gill
CEO ATLP