Dear Parents, 21st April 2020

Here is some updated advice and support for you. It comes from the government website if you would like to look at the whole guidance:
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/help-primary-school-children-continue-their-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19

In terms of **structuring the day** the guidance recommends:
➢ get up and go to bed at the same time each day;
➢ have regular meal times;
➢ have regular breaks;
➢ make time to be active - children are used to regular play at lunch and break times.

In terms of using **digital devices**, it recommends to 'set appropriate parental controls on any devices and supervise their use of websites and apps'. However, it goes on to recommend reducing screen time:
➢ use books and other printed materials that school has provided or that you have at home;
➢ write by hand – try asking them to complete work by hand, write a diary, a summary of things they have learned or done each day or 'to do' lists;
➢ be active and get away from the screen regularly – see a selection of physical activity resources for primary school children;
➢ stop using digital devices at least an hour before bed.

There is also guidance specific to different age groups:
Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children
The best way to help children aged 4 to 7 learn is to:
- sit with them as they work
- do active and practical things, rather than trying to make them sit and listen for long periods
- try to break down the work into shorter periods, based on how long they can concentrate
- take frequent breaks
- praise or reward them when they do well

Talking
Talk with your child throughout the day and try to explain new words. For example, discuss everything you are doing and pick out words that might be new to them.
Reading together
When you read with your child try to:
- express the emotion in the story
- give colour to the characters using voices, tone and pace
- discuss the things you are reading

You can make a story more interesting and help your child develop their understanding of a book by linking what you are reading to their life.
Ask your child questions about what you are reading as you go. For example:
- ask some questions that only need a short answer, such as what colour something is, or the name of a character
- ask some questions that need a longer answer, such as how a character is feeling
- ask them to tell you what has happened in the story so far

Phonics
Phonics is a method schools use to teach children how to read quickly and skilfully.
Try to sit with your child and practise with them.

Writing
Try to help children to continue to practise their writing. This may include the formation of letters and familiarity with pens and pencils for younger children, or practising creative writing for older children.
Ask children to write about their day-to-day experiences of being at home, or to write letters to send to family members.
Numbers
Practise counting and numbers. This does not always have to be a planned activity. For example, count things around the house while you are doing other things like cooking or cleaning.

Year 3 to 6 children
The best way to help children aged 7 to 11 learn is to:

- give them support and direction, but encourage them to do work independently too
- include active and practical things, rather than trying to make them sit and work for long periods
- try to break down the work into shorter periods, based on how long they can concentrate
- take frequent breaks
- praise or reward them when they do well

To check if they are learning try to:

- ask them questions as they go
- talk about things they learned

Talking
Ask children to talk through what they have learned during the day and find time to talk with them more generally.
Reading
Talk to your child about what they are reading. This will help them understand what they have read and encourage them to read for fun.
Ask your child questions about what they are reading. For example:

- ask questions that make them think about the story, such as how a character is feeling
- ask them to tell you what has happened in the story so far

Writing
Try to help children practise their writing. Using pen and paper will help children be ready for when they go back to school.

Information for parents of Year 6 children
Year 6 children should continue doing any work set for them by their school.
To prepare for going to secondary school this can be a good time for them to follow their own interests. For example, for:

- history, by visiting the English Heritage website to explore England's history
- geography, by researching other countries
- science, by finding out more about the human body on BBC Bitesize
- art, by trying the activities on TATE Kids

It has been lovely to see the videos of the children with their beautiful pictures and messages for us. Thank you all for doing an amazing job: staying at home and keeping yourselves, your family and others safe.

With kindest regards and hope to see you all again soon,

Alison Field and all of the Sheepy Team