



School Newsletter

With Christ we live, we love, we learn and we grow

22.04.2020

Dear parents/ carers,

Good evening, I hope everyone is well and keeping safe. I hope you all managed to have a happy Easter and an enjoyable break.

The summer term began on Monday in the same unusual circumstances as the spring term ended a couple of weeks ago, with our children not coming to school to work, play and socialise but instead doing their school work at home.

We have no idea when schools will reopen; we just know it will not be in the next three weeks. Therefore, the teachers will continue to plan and respond to the work your children are doing at home as they have been doing over the closure period. I am really proud of the work that the children and staff are doing and the excellent communication that is going on between you all.

We recognise the challenges you face as parents with home learning and we applaud the work you are doing at home with your children. And like I said in the last newsletter, the circumstances in which learning can be supported is different in every home. We know that some of you are facing huge challenges in combining your own jobs with supporting the learning of your children. No one can expect parents and carers to act as teachers. All we can ask is that you and your children do your best - and we know that you are. So thank you!

I have included in this newsletter links to lots and lots of resources that have recently been made available to help you support learning at home. Sometimes, it can feel there might even be too much and it's all a bit overwhelming. However, I have signposted it to you because you might find it useful. You can dip in and out and use as little or as much as you want. I have also added a note to for Y4 parents at the end of the newsletter.

School does remain open for children of critical workers where they cannot stay safely at home. At this point, I would also like to thank the parents who are critical workers who have followed the government advice and kept their children at home despite the huge challenges that presents to them.

... And the most recent scientific advice on how to further limit the spread of COVID-19 is clear. If children can stay safely at home, they must, to limit the chance of the virus spreading.

That is why the government has asked parents to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and asked schools to remain open only for those children who absolutely need to attend...

...But the fewer children making the journey to school, and the fewer children in educational settings, the lower the risk that the virus can spread and infect vulnerable individuals in wider society.

... If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they must be. DfE Guidance - March 2020.

Thank you for your understanding and co-operation.

##NEW## Advice and Resources to support online learning.

On Monday this week, the government published a wide range of helpful resources which I would recommend to you:

1. Advice on continuing education at home – nursery, primary and SEND.
2. A list of online resources to support home learning including mental well-being.
3. Online lessons for remote learning (Oak Academy and BBC Bitesize).

I have put the web links to find these here but I have also attached the documents to newsletter as pdfs.

1. Advice on continuing education at home

This gives advice for parents and carers looking after nursery-aged children, primary school children and children with special educational needs and/ or disabilities to help them continue their education during coronavirus (COVID-19). I have attached these documents to this newsletter. **These give advice on: structuring the day, using digital devices and also give lots of links to other helpful websites.**

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/supporting-your-childrens-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

2. A list of online resources to support home learning - including mental well-being.

This signposts parents to a wealth of online learning resources. There is lots of stuff on here including resources for secondary age children too; it might just be worth browsing through over time and picking out the relevant bits for you.

Please note individual resources do not replace St Mary's planned curriculum, and the resources in this list are not intended to do so. They may be useful for parents in considering how they could support their children's education, but they should not be used in place of existing resources which we are using as part of our continued provision for pupils' education at this time. **The materials to support children's wellbeing are well worth a look.**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-online-education-resources/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-online-education-resources-for-home-education#english>

3 Online lessons for remote learning (Oak Academy and BBC Bitesize).

A raft of online lessons have been made available by the DfE and the BBC to support learning at home.

Oak Academy - *In addition, to support the hard work of schools in delivering remote education, the Oak National Academy launched on Monday 20 April. This brand-new enterprise has been created by 40 teachers from some of the leading schools across England, backed by government grant funding. It will provide 180 video lessons each week, across a broad range of subjects from maths to art to languages, for every year group from Reception through to Year 10.*

<https://www.thenational.academy/>

The BBC Bitesize website has also produced online lessons.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize>

Teachers at St Mary's may use some of these resources in preparing the learning for your children.

Child Protection and Safeguarding

Since much of the children's learning is accessed online, it is worth repeating the government's advice to schools and advice for parents:

Where can I go to get support to help keep my child safe online?

There is a lot of support available to keep your child safe online. Below are some useful links to help parents and carers:

- [*Thinkyouknow*](#) (advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online)
- [*Internet matters*](#) (support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online)
- [*Parent info*](#) (support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online)
- [*LGfL*](#) (support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online)
- [*Net-aware*](#) (support for parents and carers from the NSPCC)

*Taken from DfE Guidance: Closure of educational settings: information for parents and carers
Updated 31 March 2020*

Important Message for Y4 Parents from Church

Kinga Gray-Grzeczynska contacted me to say that she has had a number of parents ringing her and asking about the First Holy Communion date. She asked me to add a note in this newsletter to parents, that we are not certain if we can go ahead with the 7th June Mass because we need permission from the Archbishop to open the church again. However, when the go-ahead is given, she will let the school know so we can make plans either to keep the 7th June date or agree a new date.

Best wishes,

Patrick Smyth Headteacher

