Friday 29th January 2021

To all Parents and Carers

We have now had confirmation that schools will be open for keyworker and those in need of additional support until at least 8th March. This does mean that after half term we will be maintaining remote learning for those children who are not in school.

We are working hard to ensure that those children in school and those at home are able to access learning in ways that will support, motivate and progress their learning. We appreciate that remote learning is not the same as being in school where children have access to school resources, teachers a fixed routine and of course their friends but we have been very pleased with individual pupil’s engagement with tasks and parent feedback. Certainly the learning we made in the Autumn term and the steps made to familiarise children with Google Classroom and other learning platforms does seem to have been worthwhile.

We are conscious that some schools have elected to opt for live teaching lessons for remote learning but we still feel that for our school context and for many of our families that our chosen provision was the right choice and thank you for working with us to achieve the best outcomes for children at this time.

We have also now been informed that school will close as normal for February half term so our first day of school and remote learning will be Tuesday 23rd February.

We are very grateful to parent support at this time. Everyone everywhere is feeling the effects of a third lockdown. It is a year since the world began to talk about Covid 19. Italy suspended flights into their country on 31st January 2020 after they had the first two positive cases in Rome…. and then the journey into lockdown across Europe began.

**Kindness Matters**

Please do acknowledge in yourself and others that the limitations and the on going changes are having an effect. I hope that you are finding ways to rise above this and to seek out ways to be positive and hopeful and to see the best in the smallest of ways to bring some lightness at this time.

**Making a difference**

Radio Devon continue to report daily about people who are making a difference.

I thought I’d share with you the story of Max, the 10 year old Devon boy who has camped out for over 10 months in honour of and support for an elderly neighbour he had befriended. Max wanted to raise money for the hospice who supported his neighbour.

Max has inspired others and raised lots of money in the process. His full story is attached.

<https://www.devonlive.com/news/devon-news/devon-boy-tent-max-woosey-4616409>

**Exeter Sleepout 5th March**

It might seem too much to consider anything more at this time but families taking part in this event say that it has really helped them to focus on small pluses that we might otherwise take for granted and also many have had an adventure.

Exeter Sleepout is an initiative to raise awareness of homeless people at this time.

<https://www.julianhouse.org.uk/support-us/events/big-exeter-sleep-out-at-home/>

The organisers are hoping that some families will raise sponsorship but they are also encourage participation to raise awareness too.

Finally, it is important to know that the vaccine is bringing some hope. Devon levels of Covid remain high but are levelling quickly.

Stay safe, be kind and let others be kind to you.

From all at St Mary’s

Mrs Mannix