**Dear Parents and Carers**

When we started this academic year no one could have imagined this. The events of this last week seem to be straight from a fiction book but here we are trying to work out the right thing to do each day as new national guidelines are shared and more changes happen.

Last week we were so amazed by the children’s positivity to help the world by firstly washing their hands and then by understanding that by keeping away from their friends they would be saving lives. We still don’t know what is to come but we are all doing the best we can to support our community and the wider world.

**It is an incredible time and you are being incredible too.** You are such important role models right now in showing the children that each one of us has a part in contributing to this situation.

As we approach the official Easter holiday it is looking more and more likely that we will remain with national social distancing for the week after the holiday and possibly for longer. You may feel that because of this and because it won’t feel like the holidays due to the social distancing that it would be better to keep up with a loose structure of learning and play. I think it would be sensible to do whatever you think is best. You know your children and your situation.

In the news there is very sad and serious information being shared with us but there is also incredible news of people’s kindness and goodwill. Since Tuesday this week 250,000 people in the UK have volunteered to support the NHS. Every day we hear of small acts of kindness that give us hope that this will be ok. It will be ok eventually. As a country we will get through this.

**UK wave to support NHS workers** .

**Please do stop at 8.00pm today and wave for NHS workers.**

**And know that at the same time the staff at St Mary’s with be thinking of you and all of our lovely children.**

**School this week**

Our priority is to ensure that you are safe with the amazing task you have been charged with; creating a life in the context of full time social distancing. We are reminded that we will get through this. We will. A reminder that school remains open for named pupils only so staff are on site. If you have questions or concerns then e mail and we will get back to you.

Teachers are working on a range of tasks to help move the school forward. Those who were already enrolled on professional on line courses which they were expecting to complete over this academic year will be prioritising those. We have many new documents to prepare for the changes in the Ofsted Framework which came about in September 2019. Up til now we have been working on these every Tuesday after school and in our own time after school so we making these another focus.

In school due to the opening of the school for named pupils there have been many new documents and systems put in place. Responding to these minute by minute creates a lot of actions. Ensuring that those in school are healthy and social distancing is adhered to whilst we provide activity for those pupils who are in is a new and developing project.

**Children’s Learning during school closure**

The feedback we’ve had so far about the children’s learning packs is that they are helping to provide some structure. Please do not feel that you are turning your home into school. You need to find a balance that allows everyone in your household to be ok through this. Giving priority to reading and times tables and then finding ways that motivate your child to be curious and to find their way into and through learning is the very best you can do.

Every form of formal class learning such as handwriting or PE can be achieved through a very wide range of activities. Find something that your child is interested in learning, encourage their independence by getting them to cook and to tidy up with you. Vacuuming could be a great PE lesson! Please don’t think that you have to do a 9.00 to 3.30 day of children sitting at a desk and please don’t think that on line learning is the only answer.

Having a structure is definitely important. It will allow times of busy activity and calm. Building snacks into the day also helps keep moods on track.

I keep hearing that giving everyone in the household time to themselves is also essential. I can hear you saying that is easier said than done. As my own children were growing up one of my children was happy to play for hours on their own and the other followed me everywhere all day , talking and telling. Even the bathroom was no escape. Having watched this child grow up, go off to study and to work away from home, she is now unexpectedly home again because of the social distancing ….chatting and following me everywhere!

Listening to the radio this week with suggestions that if possible you create a space for children to escape to; with suggestions of putting a pop up tent somewhere in the house or garden if you have one. I was reminded of my early childhood. In the holidays we were allowed to put a bedsheet over the kitchen table and we made a camp underneath it. We loved it! Be creative and be safe.

**Messages from your teachers.**

Hello Owls . Well done to the children in Owl Class who have been working to complete Bug Club reding this week. I can check the progress you are making so keep going. I am looking forward to adding a new text soon.

Keep on working Owl Class and don’t forget to read and write all of those spellings you have worked so hard to learn and your times tables. Use rock stars, sing the times tables, whatever helps.

Sending best wishes .

Miss Burnell

Dear Eagles -

Thank you and well done for working through your home-learning packs this week.

Enjoy the sunshine over the Easter break but feel free to have a go at some more activities if you would like to. AS role models at St Mary’s remember to continue to aim high.

Looking forward to speaking with you soon. Look after yourselves!

Miss Bray, Mrs Gill, Mrs Desanges and Mrs Walters

Dear Woodpeckers

I hope you have enjoyed all of the exciting home learning activities this week and it is so good to see lots of you are reading on Bug Club. We have put up some phonics games on there as well for you to explore! I am looking to see that you have been on there so keep going.

Don’t forget to remind your grown ups that you can go to the school website to find links. Have a go at Go Noodle with your grown ups.

Stay safe over the Easter holidays.

Miss Wood

**Robin Class Newsletter for parents**

Thank you to the grownups in Robin Class who are documenting their children’s learning on Tapestry. I will be posting more activities soon which you can do during the Easter Holidays and, if as we are now expecting, for after Easter.

Remember if you have a question to type the title ‘Question’ and write the question in the notes section and then once answered I will delete it.

Don’t forget to look on the school website to see learning links in the new section ‘Resources for national school closure’.

Please remember to use active learn to access your child’s reading book and phonics activities.

Remember the school code is jg66

Thank you so much for your part in this new home school learning partnership.

Stay safe.

Mrs Burrough

Hello to Kestrel Class!

I hope that you are enjoying your learning packs and have managed to access the online resources. If not, contact the office via email and I will send you a reply. Don’t forget, when you have finished your reading book you have lots online to choose from to read using Bug Club

When you are learning your spellings and times tables you can be as creative as you like. Maybe you would like to try some of these ideas?

Draw a picture and ‘hide’ spelling words or times tables facts in the picture.

Skip or jump while spelling out the words or chanting your times tables.

Put the times tables answers in and around your house, pick a question then run to find the answer.

Make your spelling words out of lego or other building blocks.

If you have a really interesting way of learning these, write instructions so that others can follow it. After Easter we can find ways to share these.

Have fun with your learning!

Mrs Fudger

**Going forward**

I have had no firm guidelines about schooling for after Easter. We are working on new ways to engage and develop learning if we do remain out of school.

Whatever happens next we are all wishing each other health and well being. Once we can get through this in one piece we will be able to sort everything else.

Please continue to check emails and know that if you have any questions of any sort you can email school and we will get back to you.



I have attached a powerpoint from one of last year’s assemblies. I hope that the images and words will encourage us at this challenging time.

Take heart and know that we will never know the difference we have made but we are undoubtedly saving lives.

**New resource links on our school website**

Please do spend some time checking out the new resources and links on our school website. There is something for everyone.

**Some new additions this week**

**Joe Wicks Body Coach**

Lots of families across the UK have been enjoying this.

[**https://www.youtube.com/user/thebodycoach1**](https://www.youtube.com/user/thebodycoach1)

**How to draw with Rob Biddulph**

A great way to practice hand eye coordination and have fun at the same time. Give it a go!

Some examples of children’s work are on our school website.

**David Walliams Daily Story Read**

A national favourite your children can enjoy hearing David and other famous people reading his stories each day at 11.00am

<https://www.worldofdavidwalliams.com/>

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