



St Mary's C of England Primary School & Nursery

Newsletter - Issue 14 - 11/01/2021



Please note that should you wish to receive this newsletter in a different format please ask at the school office.

This term's Christian Value is Perseverance:

'I can do all things through Him who strengthens me' Philippians 4:13

WOW, YOU ARE AWESOME!

I cannot believe what has been achieved this past week by teachers, staff AND parents. Our value this term is Perseverance and everyone has certainly shown that!!!!

We hope you had a good weekend. After such a turbulent week everyone deserved a rest.

Our Home / Remote Learning Offer.

As you know we have developed our Home Learning offer for this lockdown, with the daily 'live' meetings/teaching and also running the same curriculum for the children at home as those in school. There will be a timetable of activities shared with you for each day and associated links to complimentary resources etc. Our aim is to attempt to build on the sense of connection between school and home and to reduce the risk of the children losing what they have learnt in the last term.

However, here are a few things to bear in mind...

- 1) The first and most important outcome of this situation is that we all survive (physically and mentally) this pandemic!
- 2) Most of the children caught up most of their missed learning last term - we can catch them up again.
- 3) There is more to child development than academic attainment and improving ones knowledge.

These statements are not an excuse for us all to not try to help children continue their learning over lockdown, or allow the children to do no learning during the next six or more weeks. However, we need to strike a balance for us all.

The Home Learning is there to support you and your children to learn at home whilst we get this virus under control, so if you do not log on to every meeting or your child is not enjoying them, or they do not fit with your work / home learning schedule then please do not stress. If you need the children to engage in BBC lessons for a day or so, or work on Purple Mash or you all need to go for a walk during the day then that is okay. To be honest it is probably better than okay, if trying to keep to the timetable and log on each time is going to cause you and your children to be overly stressed.

Also, there might be a problems that arise with the technology so if you log on and you are not admitted or there is a sound or video problem etc. then please just log off, have a look at the time table and go for it. Do not stress, no need to ring the school or email, just breathe and do what you think is right for your child and have a go at the daily work or an alternative.

Also, if you only have one device and your children have their online meeting at the same time and you want to take part then please do alternate days or choose which year group's learning you need the explanation for etc.

Your children will be okay and if you explain something incorrectly, it will not affect them for ever. We need the children back with us, with well parents, when we get out of this situation. When we're are all back together again physically, we will work with your children and help them catch up again. Educationally, together we will make it okay in the end.

I would however, recommend the children, as a minimum, read everyday with you, do some writing, phonics/spelling some maths and topic work. The government 3 - 4 hour (KS2) expectation is not always manageable. Weekly exercise



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and some art and craft activities would also be recommended. Please do not let them just play for 6 weeks and not reinforce last terms learning but as I said earlier - this is about balance and surviving!

So....

Please keep up the dialogue with the teachers and staff through Tapestry, Class Dojo or email and we will absolutely do all we can to support you.

The daily lessons are shared with parents in the morning (or at times the night before) and these are followed up with a Zoom meeting to explain and for live teaching. Please encourage your child to log-on each day or contact the class teacher for support. All learning carried out can be returned to teachers for marking and to inform next steps of learning (and there are varying ways of doing this).

I am mindful that staff have children and family at home. I have asked that they respond to parents between the hours of 8:30 and 5:00. It is possible that some staff may be able to communicate at additional times but that is at their own discretion.

Zoom - Parent Information

- ✓ Zoom will only be used for delivering sessions with prior agreement and not for any other contact. If concerns are raised during the session, we will follow this up with a telephone conversation which does not involve the child.
- ✓ All Zoom calls will be set up by a member of St Mary's School and Nursery and an invitation sent out to the family ahead of the session.
- ✓ One or two staff members will be present during the call at all times.
- ✓ Parents must set up the laptop with a neutral background and be aware of what can be seen in the wider frame. Ensure that the camera is straight ahead and focused on head and shoulders and that you are set up in an appropriate area of the house e.g. not a bedroom. There should be no interruptions or background appearances from other family members during the call.
- ✓ Parents should remain in the room during the whole session to support.
- ✓ In the unlikely situation where the video conferencing session is interrupted by other family members living either with the family or staff, the call will be ended immediately. In this case the staff member will end the call by hanging up and resume a session at the next agreed date.
- ✓ Children and parents must be dressed appropriately, as you would for a face-to-face session.
- ✓ Children and adults must use appropriate language, as you would for a face-to-face session.
- ✓ Screen sharing, screen shots and recording of sessions is not allowed by anyone participating (except the host) in the call/meeting. A copy of the Zoom meeting will be stored securely at school. These will be deleted at the end of lockdown.

These guidelines have been written to protect everyone using video conferencing within a school setting. If you would like more information about Zoom, please go to:

<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/networks/zoom/>

For more information on keeping children safe during video conferencing please go to:

- ✓ <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/guidance/video-conferencing-services-using-securely>
- ✓ <https://parentinfo.org/article/video-chatting-a-guide-for-parents-and-carers-of-primary-school-age-children>
- ✓ https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/files/vtc_infographic.pdf

If parents have any questions or concerns, we encourage you to communicate with school through email or Class Dojo.



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Increasing Data Usage on Mobile Devices and Access to Devices

We have been made aware of a scheme that temporarily increases data allowances for mobile phone users on certain networks. This is so that children and young people can access remote education if their face-to-face education is disrupted. Schools, trusts and local authorities can request mobile data increases for children and young people who:

- do not have fixed broadband at home
- cannot afford additional data for their devices
- are experiencing disruption to their face-to-face education

Parents with access to a mobile phone on one of the following networks might be able to benefit: Three

- Smarty
- Virgin Mobile
- EE
- Tesco Mobile
- Sky Mobile

Other providers may join the scheme at a later stage. If you are using mobile devices and would like to request an increase in your data allowance, please contact the school with the following information:

- the name of the account holder
- the number of the mobile device
- the mobile network of that device (for example Three)

Additionally, we have taken up the offer of Vodafone Free Data SIMs. I have a number of these in school. If you have a device for a slot for a SIM card you can just add it. Or if you have a Smart phone you can put the SIM in and use the data to connect/tether other devices by using the HOTSPOT feature on the phone. The SIM provides 30GB data for 90 days. It will start when the SIM is inserted in the phone. Please contact the office if this will help to support home learning.

Access to a device

From January 15th, I understand that we may be able to request more devices from the DFE (all of ours have currently been allocated). If this would help your child access their work then again please contact the school.

Nursery

The most recent guidance is that nurseries should remain open for children's usual timetabled hours. We are absolutely committed to educating children, but it would be right to remind parents that the government has also advised us to 'STAY HOME' and scientific advice is that we need to do this in order to stop the spread of the virus. Government guidance on Friday states that 'parents should keep their children at home if they can.' I would ask that you please reflect carefully upon this advice when making your decision about whether you wish your child to resume nursery attendance, especially if there is someone at home. Should you wish to resume the take up of your Nursery place please contact the school: office@stmaryswrithlington.co.uk

Free School Meals

As I type the government has not given any updates on the provision of FSM vouchers. We will email parents early next week to let them know whether we will be providing food boxes or vouchers.



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Lockdown Rules

Summary: what you can and cannot do during the national lockdown

You must stay at home. The single most important action we can all take is to stay at home to protect the NHS and save lives.

You should follow this guidance immediately. This is [the law](#).

Leaving home

You must not leave, or be outside of your home except where necessary. You may leave the home to:

- shop for basic necessities, for you or a vulnerable person
- go to work, or provide voluntary or charitable services, if you cannot reasonably do so from home
- exercise with your household (or support bubble) or one other person, this should be limited to once per day, and you should not travel outside your local area.
- meet your [support bubble](#) or [childcare bubble](#) where necessary, but only if you are legally permitted to form one
- seek medical assistance or avoid injury, illness or risk of harm (including domestic abuse)
- attend education or childcare - for those eligible

If you do leave home for a permitted reason, you should always stay local - unless it is necessary to go further, for example to go to work. Stay local means stay in the village, town, or part of the city where you live.

If you are [clinically extremely vulnerable](#) you should only go out for medical appointments, exercise or if it is essential. You should not attend work

Meeting others

You cannot leave your home to meet socially with anyone you do not live with or are not in a [support bubble](#) with (if you are legally permitted to form one).

You may exercise on your own, with one other person, or with your household or support bubble. This should be limited to once per day, and you should not travel outside your local area.

You cannot meet other people you do not live with, or have not formed a support bubble with, unless for a permitted reason.

[Stay 2 metres apart](#) from anyone not in your household.

Exercise

You can continue to exercise alone, with one other person or with your household or support bubble. This should be limited to once per day, and you should not travel outside your local area. You should maintain social distancing. See exercising.

For further information please see: [National lockdown: Stay at Home - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

To mitigate risk and contact with others please ensure collection of packs, food or other visits to school form part of your daily exercise.