



# St Mary's School Newsletter



02 April 2020

Dear Parents,

It seems very strange to be writing to you in such strange times. I hope you and your families are all safe and well, and coping with living in close quarters.



The sky seems very clear at the moment – no vapour trails anywhere, and the world seems strangely silent on the sand dunes (where I walk). Watch out for the satellites that are so clearly visible overhead at night in the moment, and see if you can spot any planets – some are very bright!

If you are on social media and haven't followed our Facebook page, please do, we up-date it quite frequently, and it's a good way of keeping in touch.

facebook



## Being at home together

An article in the Guardian by a member of an Italian family in lockdown with his family has shared some suggestions that they found worked for them:

1. Be on the same page – have a family meeting where you agree some rules.
2. Be honest – talk to your family about what is going on (at an age appropriate level), let the children say how they are feeling and keep communication open.
3. Set a structure – people like structure in their day, it makes them feel secure, don't obsess about sticking to it, but have a structure. Get up as usual, wash, dress, etc.
4. Keep moving – online, activity courses in the garden, a brisk walk – exercise is a great for brightening everyone's mood.
5. Get things done – try to have something each day that you can tick off as completed – a school activity, reading a chapter of a book, afternoon tea, going for that walk, Facetiming family, anything that gives you a sense of achievement and of having accomplished an objective.
6. Giving each other space – even in a small flat, make areas where you and/or the children can have some private time – behind a sofa, in a corner – just agree that this is chill out space.
7. Keep in touch – reach out to your friends and family and stay connected –
8. Learn from you experiences – if things don't work – try something else. Find pleasure in what you can, and change what you can, too.



## Home learning

Next week we will be trialling the next phase in our home learning using the Seesaw app. Staff will be trying out the system and putting on some optional activities for your children to have a go at, so that we are ready to fly after the Easter Holidays. It is a very popular app used by schools in Jersey and UK, and will not only help your child's learning, but also add a further way of communicating with teachers. Keep checking your emails for more information and your individual logons





## Communication

Thank you to everyone that has sent in pictures of the children's home learning - it has been great to see what you've all been doing. Please continue to send us examples of what you've been doing to keep us informed, but also to inspire other children as we post examples to our Facebook Page.

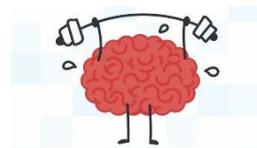
Could I just ask that you send no more than one or two pictures a week, and with just a couple of sentences explaining what's been going on. We have a small number of parents sending us lots of pictures daily with a minute by minute account of the day.

Teachers are working hard from home developing planning for the Summer Term, if we're back, and also planning activities for if we're not. In terms of daily time devoted to parents emails, it is a relatively short part of the day, and if you've sent in too large an email the chances are teachers will scan it quickly and might miss something important.

It would be great if you selected the best bits of your week and share that with us!

## Mental Health

There was an excellent post that I shared on Facebook, but I know not all of you are on social media.



“Don't worry about your children regressing in school. Every single kid is in this boat, and they will all be OK. When we are back in the classroom, we will all course correct and meet them where they are. Teachers are experts at this! Don't pick fight with your kids because they don't want to do the maths. Don't scream at your kids for not following the schedule. Don't mandate 2 hours of learning time if they are resisting it.

If I can leave you with one thing, it's this: at the end of all of this, your kids' mental health will be more important than their academic skills. And how they felt during this time will stay with them long after the memory of what they did during these 4 or more weeks is long gone. So keep that in mind every single day.”

I can't tell you how important this is. Don't beat yourself up if the children are not doing their home-learning, and have been challenging. This is a new way of living for us all at the moment and it will take a while for you and your children to adjust from perhaps feeling that you don't see enough of each other, to feeling that you need some space!



Make the most of your opportunities to exercise and spend some socially distant time outside if you can – the sun is out at the moment, so take the opportunity to get out and have a walk.

We have a well-being page on the school website with ideas for how you can take care of your mental health and well being and that of your family.

## Vouchers

This is an anxious time for families, I know, and for some of you this is compounded by money worries. We can't offer to solve all problems, but the Parish Church has given us some Coop vouchers for families who are in need of support at this time.



The process is as near to anonymous as possible, as we have to keep records of how much we have given, but no-one apart from me, Mrs Harber and Miss Boydens will know who the funds go to. If you need a helping hand at the moment, then let please let me or Mrs Harber know.

Ms Steg: 07829 839253

Mrs Harber: 07829 964534

**Keep in touch**

We are trying to keep in touch with you all, just to make sure that everyone in our school community is OK. If you need our support and help, don't wait for us to phone you, email the teachers or Ms Steg, or Mrs Harber, and reach out. We'll help if we can.

We are heading into what would have been the Easter holidays. (I knew I shouldn't have booked Disney this holiday!) Be kind to yourselves and reach out if you need to.

Kind regards,

Maria Steg

