

Dover St Mary's Church of England Primary School



Learning for life with God as our guide Weekly Newsletter – Friday, 8th January 2021

Dear Parent/Carers,

Now that the dust has settled since Monday evening's announcement about the National Lockdown I would like to reach out to you all as we enter this new way of working and 'being' as a school community.

Childcare

We have a number of children who have been registered with us as critical worker children, who require childcare during the lockdown. With our sessional booking system parent/carers are sending children in according to their need. Childcare is mostly being staffed by the Teaching Assistants.

Learning at Home

I would like to remind/outline to you our current approach regarding home learning.

Planning

Home learning is posted onto the school website for each class every week within the classes tab.

From the Home Page, please go to Curriculum / Classes / select your child's class / Home Learning / select relevant date.



It is intended that planning for the following week will be uploaded later in the working day each Friday.

Teachers have worked to produce plans for English, mathematics and other 'topic' subjects. There are links to relevant websites, YouTube recordings and recorded lessons provided by BBC Bitesize, National Oaks Academy and White Rose Hub (for maths). Teachers are aiming to produce children/parent friendly planning for you to follow. That being said, they are more than happy to be contacted by parents or children who would like some more explanation.

Completing Work

We all recognise and understand the challenges which home schooling can present. There can be no 'one-size fits all' approach as all family circumstances are unique, however I offer the following guidance, some of which you may find useful.

1. Your child will need access to a laptop, computer or tablet to see the resources which the teachers have prepared/signposted. A mobile 'phone can also be used.
2. The plans produced are all designed to be completed WITHOUT access to a home printer. You may print if you wish, but the tasks can be completed with the child looking at the screen and recording (if there is recording to be done) in an exercise book. Exercise books can be collected from school – these will be available daily to be picked up between 9.15am – 2.45pm. Please come to the Laureston Place gate and ring the gate buzzer. Let us know if you require these to be posted to you.
3. If you are not sure what the planning means please contact the class teacher by email, they will be only too happy to help.
4. Be realistic about how much your child can achieve in a day. DfE guidance suggests a total of 3 hours of school work per day for Key Stage 1, and 4 hours for Key Stage 2.
5. If you are able to run the day in recognisable school timetable chunks, then give that a go. Starting after breakfast try the first session of the day, then have a break, then the next session and then lunch. An afternoon session could be completed by 3.00pm, and then time for a rest! In this way your child can recognise the difference between 'home-schooling' and home. I understand that this structure will not be possible for everyone, depending on parent work commitments during the day and the demands of siblings.
6. Many of you may be sharing devices amongst children and parents – if possible set a timetable for the day so each of your children know when it is their turn.
7. Teaching staff are keen to hear from you – whether things are going well or not! Completed work, or photographs of, should be sent daily, by email, to the class teacher. You are welcome to email throughout the day as pieces are completed, alternatively we recognise that for some of you emailing later in the day/evening is the option which works best for you; that is fine.
8. The BBC will be continuing educational broadcasting, which may help families who do not have enough internet capacity and/or devices at home.

Keeping in Touch

The teaching staff will send an email at the start of each school day and at the end – this signals to you that their working day is beginning and ending and is a nice way for them to reach out to you and your child. You do not need to respond to these emails, unless you wish to. If you feel that your inbox is becoming overwhelmed and you would prefer not to receive these do please let the class teacher know.

As mentioned above, please email your child's class teacher every school day with your child's completed work. Do also use email to ask questions as well as share concerns and triumphs!

Teachers will telephone all families once a week to touch base, to chat to you and - if possible - to your child. Mrs Amanda Punton, our Family Liaison Officer, will also be making contact with many of you during each week, you are of course very welcome to telephone or email her.

The school is staffed during the school day so do please also telephone and/or email to speak to the office staff, Mrs Trelfer, Mrs Punton or me.



We are all in this together!

As I mentioned earlier there is 'no one size fits all'. Do please let us know if something we are doing or expecting is not manageable for you and we will work out a way to better support you and your child.

Whilst this has turned out to be a somewhat unexpected week for us all, I thank you all for stepping so quickly into our new way of working and look forward to staying in touch with you all.



St Mary's Advent Windows

'The Christmas window display was a massive hit with parishioners and there was a lot of public interest. I can't thank you, the staff and children enough for all the work that went into creating the pieces'

– Mrs Simmons, Governor

"Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past.

See, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.

Isaiah 43:18-19

Collective Worship

As the week started we thought about New Year and looked forward. We celebrated Epiphany and the Kings bringing gifts to Jesus, and we thought about how we can be a bringer of light and hope.

'My wish for you is that you continue. Continue to be who you are, to astonish a mean world with your acts of kindness' - Mary Angelou

Coronavirus Symptoms

Children or staff with any of the three symptoms of Covid:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss or change to your sense of taste or smell

are to **stay at home** and isolate, as must the rest of their household. They should get a Covid test.

Children and staff must also stay at home and isolate if a member of their household has any of these symptoms until the outcome of a Covid test is known, and follow advice accordingly.

If your child has attended school for childcare and tests positive for Covid you must immediately inform the school – by telephone on 01304 206887 during the school day. If you get a positive result at the weekend, during the evening or in a school holiday please email office@stmarysprimary.net

To get a test go online to:

nhs.uk/coronavirus

OR

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

OR

Telephone 111

Is your child born between
1st September 2016 & 31st August 2017?

Applications for Year R September 2021 primary school places close on

Friday 15th January 2021

To apply, please go to:

kent.gov.uk/primaryadmissions

Application forms are also available from local schools, by contacting KCC on 03000 412121 or by emailing

If you would like any further information about St Mary's, please contact us - 01304 206887

Please spread the word to anyone you know.

As always, please don't hesitate to make contact via email or telephone with any queries, comments or concerns you may have.

Helen Comfort - Executive Headteacher
office@stmarysprimary.net - 01304 206887

Follow this link to our website

<https://www.st-marys-dover.kent.sch.uk/>