

St John's Church of England Primary School

'The JOY of the Lord is Your Strength' (Nehemiah 8:10)

Headteacher: Mr Phil Thomson



Tuesday 7th April 2020

Dear Parents,

I hope this latest update finds you well. I can't believe that we are currently in what would have been the Easter holidays at the moment! We are still in school with a skeleton staff to provide care for the children of critical workers. It is vital that we continue to thank all those who are on the frontline in the battle against COVID-19 – you are all superstars. We are continuing to keep St. John's open for as long as there is need and sufficient staff. If you require critical worker care for your children, please ring or email us at school so that we can add you to the daily register. There is also a booking form on the website.

It seems massively strange to have so few children in school at the moment; I am having to be extra loud to make up for it! It must feel strange to everyone at home at the moment; I am sure you are missing us as much as we are missing you. It has been lovely though to catch up with some of our families via email or phone call. Over time, our aim will be to check-in with all families to ensure everyone and everything is OK in these unprecedented times. Please be patient if we have not got to you yet – your time will come! In the meantime, should there be anything we can help with at school please ring us on 01704 227441 or email us at enquiries@stjohnsprimary.co.uk.

It seems likely that schools will remain closed for a significant amount of time yet. Every day there seems to be a different expert giving their opinion on when 'normal service' may start to resume. I receive daily updates from the Department for Education and also from Sefton and will continue to pass on any key information to yourselves via email and posts on the website. If you are not receiving email updates, please contact the office and we shall check / add details.

Much of the work added to the Home Learning section of the website has been well received by parents and children and this will continue to stay in its location. Currently, teachers are developing much more specific weekly timetables for each year group which will hopefully give a little more structure to each day. These timetables will be ready for 'rolling-out' at the start of the summer term and full instructions will be sent out next week. As part of the newly structured home learning, there will be the ability to set up communication channels directly with your child's teacher through Class Dojo which will hopefully benefit both pupils and teachers. Again – more will follow on this next week. This work is set to provide structure but is not in any way compulsory for any child. We leave any decisions about how the activities and structure will work each day up to you as parents – but our work will be there to help if needed.

The government have now fully launched their voucher scheme for families of children in receipt of Free School Meals. We have been in touch with all families of these children and will continue to do so regularly to ensure vouchers make it through OK and families have everything they need. We realise that there may be families struggling who are not eligible for free school meals and – if that is the case – please contact us at school as we may be able to help or point you in the direction of those who can.

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A reminder of the government guidance on handwashing:

The most important thing individuals can do to protect themselves is to wash their hands more often. Soap and water and regular handwashing for at least 20 seconds is the best way of staying safe. Hand washing with soap employs a mechanical action that loosens bacteria and viruses from the skin, rinsing them into the drain. Drying hands afterwards makes the skin less hospitable to the virus. Hand sanitiser can be effective if soap is not available or the situation makes using soap less feasible (i.e. when outside) but using hand sanitiser provides none of the virus-destroying friction that rubbing your hands together and rinsing with water provides.

A video on hand washing can be found at:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bQCP7waTRWU&feature=youtu.be>

All that remains for me to say is that on behalf of staff and governors at St. John's I hope you all have a lovely Easter and stay safe and well. Enjoy the (current) weather, make the most of your time as a family and love your time together. These are unprecedented, unknown and stressful times for us all. Please keep in touch with other members of the St. John's family and remember that we are here to help in school if needed. Ring us, email us, say hello over the fence, I've even shouted out of the window at passers-by but it is so important we all remember how wonderful St. John's is as a school and we look forward to seeing you all back with us soon.

Kind Regards

Phil Thomson