



Remote Learning

Thank you to everyone for supporting the remote learning. Pupils seem to be getting into a routine now and most are accessing the remote learning, which is a mixture of on- and offline activities, through the Class Blogs. This means that all pupils, whether at home or at school, are able to access the same learning.

The government have asked schools to provide this so that children will continue to follow the curriculum that they would have experienced, if they had been in school as normal, during the Spring term. Staff will continue to contact families during the week so please ask for help if you are having any technical difficulties accessing the work.

Achievement Assemblies

Staff have been very impressed with the learning that has taken place and the resilience that has been shown by pupils this term, in challenging circumstances. From Monday, we will begin sharing 'virtual' Achievement Assemblies each week, to celebrate the fantastic learning that has taken place in each class during the previous week. One 'home learner' and one 'school based' learner from each class will receive a BLP (Building Learning Power) certificate that I will announce in the assembly. This will be recorded and shared as a link on the Class Blogs and website. Certificates will be posted to families after the assembly has taken place.

Also, please continue to let us know of any achievements you would like us to share with our school community. For example, we are very proud of **Libby**, in Avon Class, who was entered into a big dance competition called the Southwest Online Dance Festival. She was absolutely amazing, winning 1st in seven sections and coming 2nd in one. Congratulations, Libby!

Saints SW Family Challenge

Coach Ben and Saints South West are organising a virtual Active Minutes Challenge involving all the family during February (see attached letter for more information).

The Family Active Minutes Challenge is designed for all children and families with the main objective of encouraging and promoting families to be active during February.

Ben will collect all the data and create a table for our school, highlighting how many minutes have been accumulated and how many families participated. Certificates will also be issued for those who take part.

Safeguarding

COVID Fraud warnings

We have received some information about scams that are currently being carried out. For example, in one Covid-related scam, fraudsters are sending text messages containing a link to what police call an "extremely convincing" fake NHS website. The scam message reads "we have identified that you are eligible to apply for your vaccine" and prompts you to click on a link for further information or to apply for the vaccine. Once on the website you are asked to input your bank details to register for a vaccine.

Remember, the NHS will never ask for payment details.

Further information is available from www.devonsomersettradingstandards.gov.uk/scams-rogue-traders-and-doorstep-crime/

If you think that you have been scammed, you can get advice through Citizens Advice 0800 223 1133 or

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/scams/what-to-do-if-youve-been-scammed

You can also report the scam to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or

www.actionfraud.police.uk/reporting-fraud-and-cyber-crime

Prayer Focus

Just a reminder that the publication we usually share with families, The Wednesday Word, is still being produced electronically rather than in paper form. It can be accessed via this link:

<https://www.paperturn-view.com/uk/wednesday-word/teacher?pid=MTA101634&v=16.7>

or through our school website:

<https://www.st-marysrc.devon.sch.uk/catholic-life/the-wednesday-word/> .

This week's chosen word is "teacher" and this Sunday's Gospel reading comes from Mark, Chapter 1, verses 21-28. It tells us that Jesus was a good teacher who taught with authority.

At this time, when parents and carers are playing such an important role in helping their children with their learning, and not just teaching them what is good and right, we could try to think of ways to show our appreciation to all those who teach us at home, school or in the community. Perhaps we can: be a good learner by really listening to what they have to say; do the good and right things they have taught us; let them know that we have said a prayer for them; make them a 'thank-you' card or simply thank them for being a good teacher.

Our prayer this week is:

Dear Lord Jesus

Please bless all the people in my life who teach me. Thank you for being my friend and teacher. Please help me to learn and grow in your love.

Amen.

You may also have noticed, in the Class Blogs, that we have shared the prayers that we would usually use with the children in school. The company who produce these resources, Ten Ten, have also produced assemblies and Sunday liturgies, which can also be found on the Class Blogs.

Mental Health Week



Next week we are marking Children's Mental Health week. On the Class Blogs there will be work that is linked to wellbeing and promoting positive mental health.

The theme for this year's Children's Mental Health Week is 'Express Yourself' so next Friday (5th February) we are asking children to take part in Place2Be's 'Dress to Impress' event to raise money for this children's mental health charity. Children can dress in their favourite clothes, or clothes which express their personality, and hopefully also a pledge a donation for this charity (which can be brought into school once children return). We would love to receive photos of children 'Dressed to Impress' which can be sent via the class blogs or through the school email address

(admin@st-marysrc.devon.sch.uk) .

Children attending school at the moment can come into school next Friday in their own clothes on the same theme. A whole school collage of these pictures will be created (where parental/ carer permissions permit) which will be shared on our school website.

Sustrans Outside-In

Devon County Council have relaunched Sustrans Outside In which provides fun ideas and inspiration for parents to bring education, health and wellbeing activities into their home.

Parents can access resources by registering for a free parent newsletter. Over four weeks, you will receive weekly videos, themed activities, games and challenges designed by experienced school officers. If you are interested, please sign up using the following link:

<https://www.sustrans.org.uk/campaigns/outside-in/>

Diary Dates

You will see below the term dates for this term. Current guidance is that schools will be closed for the half term holiday. A non pupil day is planned for the Monday after half term. At the present time, we are assuming this will go ahead unless, or until, we receive information to the contrary.

Monday 15th February – Half term starts.

Monday 22nd February – Non Pupil Day

Tuesday 23rd February – Pupils return

Thursday 1st April – Last Day of Term

Monday 19th April – Pupils return

Blue Peter



The BBC have launched Blue Peter on YouTube and, as many of our children have taken part in the Blue Peter Badge challenges, we thought this might be something some of our pupils may be interested in, whilst we're in lockdown, for entertainment outside of home-schooling hours. Please see below for further information about Blue Peter:

"Blue Peter is the longest running kids' TV show in the world and we are uploading videos to it that are suitable for 5-11 year olds. We have world record breaking challenges, arts and crafts, environmental videos, cooking and baking how tos, inspirational films, gaming, celebrity appearances, dance routines and music performances. We also feature ways of getting a Blue Peter badge, behind the scenes footage and extra content about our incredible presenters Adam, Lindsey, Mwaksy, Richie and Henry the Blue Peter dog."

If you think your child would be interested in this, please subscribe to:

<https://www.youtube.com/bluepeter> - (it's completely free to subscribe).

You can also watch the live programme on CBBC at 5.00pm every Thursday, or on BBC iPlayer.

Adult Mental Health

As well as considering children's mental health at the moment, it is also important to look after our mental health and wellbeing as adults, particularly with the current lockdown restrictions meaning we are spending more time at home and away from friends and family. The NHS "Every Mind Matters" website provides expert advice, practical tips and information about how to look after your mental health and wellbeing and 'make inside feel better'. (<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/>)

Their coronavirus wellbeing advice is designed to help anyone who might be feeling more anxious or worried at the moment. It covers topics such as coping with loneliness, coping with uncertainty and change and looking after your mental health whilst staying at home. They are also offering access to a free NHS Mind Plan which will provide you with useful tips about how to deal with stress and anxiety, improve sleep and boost your mood. <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/your-mind-plan-quiz/>

Hope Programme

The HOPE programme in Devon has gone digital and is available (and FREE!) to anyone living in the South West.

There are twelve digital courses running in 2021 and these are available to anyone struggling with a long term condition, mental illness or with lockdown in general, this also includes people now living with symptoms of Long COVID.

The digital HOPE programme is different to the face to face and virtual courses as it is available 24/7 for six weeks meaning participants can complete the programme at their own pace but still with full support from trained facilitators.

To register, visit <http://bit.ly/HOPESW> or see the attached information.

