



St Nicholas Church Of England Primary School

Headteacher: Mrs A Shearer B.Ed (Hons) M.A NPQH

'Creating the space for your child to excel.'

18th January 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians

I trust you are keeping safe and are able to manage this new way of life. I have to start with saying a sincere thank you and well done from all of the staff here at St Nicholas; you are working so hard with your child's learning at home and it has been incredibly rewarding and encouraging to see all the work being submitted on Google Classroom for Years 1-6 and on Tapestry for Year R. Thank you, and well done, to our St Nicholas staff team for their support, reaching out to many homes in recent days; the impact has been wonderful and we are now seeing many more families at ease.

We are half way through January and, to date, I have been monitoring our on line work - both what we are sending out to you and also what you are returning to us. So far, the feedback is:

- Year groups that have the Power Maths Practice Books/Text Books are loving them.
(School action = we have now ordered these for children in Year 3-6 and will roll them out once the delivery arrives.)
- It is tricky for some children at home in relation to having an adequate number of devices to access the online learning at the same time as siblings.
(School action = we are liaising with external providers to organise devices on loan for those who need help.)

- Some children are completing the online tasks quickly, whilst others are finding it demanding to complete. Home life varies greatly between families, so the need varies. Parents who have to work from home, as well as trying to support their child's learning, have the challenge of juggling numerous balls.

*(School action = Now, for the first time ever, every individual child's learning environment is different. Learning at home during lockdown means different things for different families - this, we fully understand. **This is why your child's class teacher wants (and needs) your individual feedback on a regular basis; please make sure your child is, first and foremost, enjoying their learning. If your child is working over an hour on the same piece of work and they have not had a break, then please do stop them. Submit what they have completed in the hour. It is recommended that children take a few minutes screen break every 20 mins of work on their electronic device. Eye health is a key priority during all on-line learning. Opticians also recommend that you encourage your child to blink regularly when on the screen.)***

- The DfE has stated clearly that a **minimum** of 3 hours of learning per pupil should be taking place. This starts with Year R, 1 and 2 who should be having a minimum of 3 hours per day. This increases to 4+ hours for Year 3 - 6 per day. This includes live lessons.

*(School action = teachers will work very closely with their class community to ensure their pupil's well-being, motivation and enjoyment of learning remain key priorities. I have been liaising closely with some parents for feedback and one has put it quite simply and clearly - **'We want to see motivated learners returning to school post lockdown.'** My staff and I completely support this and are working hard to ensure the balance of work and home life is healthy and manageable. Teachers are working hard to ensure there is a wide range of tasks for learning each day to avoid the children sitting too long on zoom, watching powerpoints, YouTube clips etc. each day.)*

- Some families are really struggling with the technology and the demands of printing our worksheets etc at home.
(School action = we have purchased new workbooks and these will be rolled out once they arrive.)

Whilst my staff and I have clear guidance on what has to be rolled out to all children for their on line learning, we fully appreciate that the task for all adults at home is a mighty one. Everyone copes differently with this new life that we find ourselves in - what is a pressure for one, may not be for another and what may be a pressure for one day may not be for another day. The journey in the days ahead will be different for us all.

However, one thing that does remain constant through all of this is that we are here to help you. My staff and I are in school every day - please phone and speak to us. Email and Google Classroom can also be used but, quite often, a phone call does support you more effectively.

In finishing, my message to all is simply this:

- **Keep trying your best** with our on line learning. Submit what you can and do not worry about too many messages from Google Classroom saying work late, overdue etc. We trust you to submit what you can, when you can. **Daily reading** remains a top priority for every child. It has been proven, well before Covid 19 came about, that if a child misses a lot of school and they continue to read at home each day, then they will catch up quickly on their return to the classroom. The same goes with **multiplication tables** in Maths - keep up with your X tables and ALL areas of Maths will be easier.
- All children must continue to love learning and we all have to adapt and be flexible each week - if your child is not in the mood for a certain task, then leave it to do something else and come back to

the task at a later stage to complete. Unwilling learners tend not to learn very much.

Happy, motivated children learn best. A walk, baking a cake or a simple cuddle may have to come first before the lesson. Do what works best for your child. The age old truth is more evident now than ever - children are different with their parents than with their teachers when it comes to school learning and tasks. Your child, at home, is not getting the daily lesson verbal motivation comments from his/her teacher during the **learning process** within each lesson; they are not hearing the verbal 'well done - keep going' messages every 5-10mins from the teacher. These messages are vital for effective learning.

Encourage your child and **set up a home reward system that suits the way you work**. We are sending home different rewards for children who are putting in the effort with home learning tasks. Have a great week and please do try to enjoy a mixture of learning - walks, playing outdoor games, cycling, baking, helping with tasks in the home etc are all very important for healthy minds and bodies. Balance our school tasks with your home tasks.

Keep well and stay safe - Mrs Alison Shearer