

St. George's Primary School

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Dear Parent/Carer

In the event of another 'lockdown' or prolonged closure of schools due to a spike regionally in the Covid 19 virus, we have decided to move to the online platform, Class Dojo, as the means of how we communicate work materials to our pupils. Please note that work already uploaded onto the school website will continue to be relevant and can be used.

All pupils will receive a hard copy of instructions on how parents can access Class Dojo and as these are individualised **they should be kept in a safe place**. Parents are then able to request a link from the class teacher, via Class Dojo, that will provide their child with access to the tasks set. This link will stay in your Dojo inbox for you to access at all times.

A prolonged school closure has raised several areas of concern for us as teachers:

- **Teaching and Learning** – all learning in school requires a great deal of teacher input, whether this be in planning, research of suitable materials/activities or in the pace and content of lessons. However, more important than all of these is the actual teacher being present and using his/her expertise and experience to gauge the level of understanding with this being of particular importance whenever new concept is being introduced.
 - Please remember that online learning cannot replicate the actual classroom
 - Prior to completion of any work the teacher would normally read through/discuss the worksheet – you will now need to do this. How much input you will need to give will be dependent on the age and ability of each pupil. Please be realistic.
 - In school we want our children to develop a 'Growth Mindset'; therefore we encourage them to try things, knowing that they may well make mistakes. We learn from mistakes and we urge you recognise and accept that your child will not always complete work with 100% accuracy. Careless mistakes are different!
 - The work provided by teachers can be supplemented by you – making use of material from the various links provided by the class teachers or being creative and using whatever is at hand.
 - We would encourage you to mark completed work with your child/children – this is a valuable time to reinforce learning.

- **Links to useful websites** - we are happy to provide information relating to online resources BUT we also emphasise that parents have a role to play here. Many companies are offering free use of their materials at this time and on a general appraisal they appear to have extremely useful content. However, we do not have the time to view all content so parents must check before allowing their child/children to use any of the material. In school sites are extremely well filtered, this may not be the case at home!
 - As well as links provided by the class teachers on Class Dojo there is a list of links on the school website – see the Year Group pages for weekly updates for home learning. **BBC Teach and BBC Bitesize** are particularly useful, but other providers have lots of

worthwhile learning activities as well. The Government has invested in and supported the ‘**Oak Academy**’ and this is an amazing platform which covers the National Curriculum by breaking down learning in a child friendly manner, and is age relevant. Just be careful you do not incur a cost with those that may be offering usage free to start with.

- **Please remember the school funds pupil subscription to many digital providers: Purple Mash, Mathletics, TT Rock Stars, Accelerated Reader, Phonics Play (Key Stage 1 predominately, but can be used with pupils in Key Stage 2), Read Theory (Year 6), Charranga (Music). Pupils will require their log-ins and these are found in the back of their Reading Log books.**
 - Parents/Carers **must monitor** the pupils when they are working online.
- **Differentiation of work** – again this is where you will have an important role to play. Any work set by teachers will be of a generic nature and differentiation will mainly be by outcome or amount of work completed within a given time – it is very difficult for us to set a time as this will differ for each child. You know your child so please do not insist that all of a worksheet is completed when this would not be the classroom norm.
- Please remember that putting your child under undue pressure can be counterproductive!
- **Add Private Comment (on your child's work)** – this facility offered as part of Class Dojo and in normal times whenever children would be using this platform as part of learning at home and in the classroom this would be a valuable tool. However, in these extraordinary times, this facility should be used sparingly as teachers will not be able to respond to all comments.
- **Messaging the class teacher:** Although this a valuable tool for messaging questions/ advice about tasks etc we would ask that you limit this where possible as teachers will not be able to respond immediately.
- **Teachers** – Many of our teachers have young children themselves to look after when at home or family members to care for or shield (if not having to self isolate themselves on health grounds) and indeed in all probability some may contract COVID-19 therefore, while we will endeavour to do our best for your child and it must be accepted there will be limitations to what they can provide and respond to.
- **Play Time** – Please do not forget just how important exercise is in a child’s development and wellbeing. Going out for a daily walk as a family or a bicycle ride is great for the body and mind and you can set your own challenges for distance, speed and time, and more importantly it is great FUN!
- **Routine** – In the event of another prolonged period of school closure, establishing and keeping a routine is vital. A routine helps your child know what to expect and therefore helps him/her feel secure. After all children are used to routine in their school life.
- It is important to keep your child’s sleep routine the same as if he/she was still attending school. Remember this time off school is not holiday time!
 - Establish routine from the start – involve/agree with your child.
 - Build in break and exercise times.
 - Establish a location where the main body of home learning is going to take place.
 - Limit the time you have news broadcasts on (TV, websites and radio) – children can quickly pick up on the negative messages and this can drive anxiety.

- **Community Spirit** – Why not help each other?
 - If you discover a useful activity pass it on to others – many years groups have parent's social media groups so share on this platform.
 - **Consider the other ways children learn – cooking/baking, making things (art, technology, resilience skills), writing letters or postcards, keeping diary, taking photographs and a journal of the time, working with or alongside adults – in the home or work, playing board-games, helping plan the shopping, being outside and with nature and gardening for example.**
 - Let you child/children use technology to communicate with other children from their year group or class, but remember to monitor this.

Quite obviously we are all learning and adapting at these unprecedented times, and we have changed our mindset from the experiences this year. Advice on COVID-19 can change on a daily basis. This can create a stressful situation for you, our parents/carers and for us in school.

There may be a few teething issues with the system we are putting in place so we would encourage you to inform us via email and then the class teacher will attempt to get in touch to support you and your child to the best of their ability – be patient as they may not be based at school and thus not have the resources or facilities in their home environment.

Should you not have access to the internet please sign and return the slip below as we, the school, will ensure that your child has access to resources for home learning. We can only provide these resources if we have the name and class of your child/children to keep on our 'home learning packs' register. In the event your circumstances change and you have no home internet you must inform the school by email and the office staff will notify the class teacher's of the children. It will be your responsibility to come to the school to collect the work from the designated staff.

Above all else, in these extraordinary circumstances, please try to make the experience for you and your child as much fun as possible.

Furthermore, you may receive phone calls from the class teacher or class Teaching Assistant as a welfare check to see how you and your child are getting on, but this may be from a private number as staff may be needing to work from home and will need to ensure privacy is kept. Also, regularly look at the school website as teachers and staff will upload videos or may upload videos to Class Dojo as a message, to provide questioning or as a means to support learning and to keep contact with their class and pupils.

Best Wishes

Mrs Luxon and the staff of St. George's

My child/children _____
 _____ (add names) in class/es
 _____ need to be put on the home learning packs list and I will meet at the school to collect the work in the event of a 'lockdown'.

Signed _____ parent/guardian