

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope that this finds you well and staying safe in the middle of these extraordinary times.

By now we expect you may have found a new routine to your daily lives: shopping trips standing at a two metre distance from others in a queue, a daily walk of some kind and connecting with friends and family online in new ways.

We are all adjusting to new ways of living and being and this is not always easy. Some of you may be caring for children or other relatives. Some of you just may be feeling a bit out of sorts. This is entirely normal and to be expected at this point. Please see link below.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

Some of you may have even taken up a new hobby or interest. Please see links below for some ideas of online resources you might like to peruse.

### **Activities to enjoy at home**

<https://chatterpack.net/blogs/blog/list-of-online-resources-for-anyone-who-is-isolated-at-home>

### **Learning from Home update**

The teachers have been working hard to develop Learning from Home materials. Thank you for the positive feedback we have received during the past few days. We are aware that we cannot please everybody, but please be assured that we are doing our best.

We want to provide some materials which run and repeat through each week. This will help the children with their learning as they will be able to know more and remember more. We have also provided a menu of other activities which you can dip in and out of in a flexible way which suits your own household. All Learning from Home pages, including Maths and English are now available on the school website, marked from day 1 to day 10. The next set of learning pages will be uploaded on Friday the 17<sup>th</sup> April for the week beginning the 20<sup>th</sup> April.

As you know, we have taken the government and teaching unions advice to provide learning resources that will **keep children busy and enjoying learning, while providing flexibility for parents.**

We have followed the advice for Headteachers around home learning so that:

- Lots of the activities are things that the children can get on with on their own.
- There are flexible tasks that cover different areas of the curriculum,

allowing children to choose the tasks that interest them, and the ones parents feel they can manage.

- The tasks can be completed in bite sized chunks enabling flexibility for your households.
- Teachers are not live-streaming lessons because online lessons are not desirable for primary children as the teacher-pupil interaction is not easily replicated. We agree with this.
- Many children need a lot of guidance when working and cannot be left for long periods of time to complete complex tasks, so we have devised activities that the children can complete on their own, whilst recognising many parents and carers are also trying to work from home and struggle to assist with school work.
- We understand that parents cannot be expected to become teachers.
- We have also devised tasks that do not need the internet or a device such as a laptop or tablet, as some children and families will not have internet access or more than one device to use.
- We realise that it is most beneficial and realistic to offer a variety of tasks which are done working at a table or while moving around, including creative tasks.

### **Childcare for vulnerable and children of key workers**

After the Easter break, staff return to work on Monday the 20<sup>th</sup> April when St Barnabas and St Philip's School becomes the host school for the weeks beginning the 20<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> April. From then onwards the provision will rotate between the two schools on a one week on, one week off basis. St Mary Abbots will take over again on Monday the 4<sup>th</sup> May.

The childcare provision is for children whose parents are key workers. It depends heavily on the capacity of our dedicated staff teams in each school and will not be successful if it is taken advantage of by any parents who do not truly need help in these extraordinary times. Please do not use a space for your child if you do not truly need it – these spaces have to be for children of parents whose jobs play a vital part in the country's approach in dealing with this challenging situation.

We are running this scheme to save lives and request that parents only use it if they meet all necessary criteria. The Department for Education states:

**If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be.**

**If your work is critical to the COVID-19 response, or you work in one of the critical sectors and you cannot keep your child safe at home then your child will be prioritised for provision.**

### **Collective Worship**

Please look out for a special Collective Worship led by Pippa and Andy which is available following this link: <https://youtu.be/w47MJqPOdrA>

With warmest wishes to you and your loved ones.

**Mrs Harris, Executive Headteacher and Mrs Vagic, Head of School**

