



Learning and Growing Together
in Faith and Friendship

St Joseph's Catholic Academy

Member of the Newman Catholic Collegiate

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Acting Executive Principal- Mrs D Farmer

Acting Head of School – Mrs R Wilson

Monday 27th April 2020

Dear children, parents and families of St Joseph's,

I hope this letter continues to find everybody healthy and well. It was so lovely to be able to talk to some of the children on the telephone last week, and I know that all of the teaching staff have also said the same about speaking to the children in their class. It was so interesting to see how different children reacted to hearing their teacher's voice- some went really shy, others giggly and some would not stop talking! Some of my Reception class were apparently even nodding down the phone at me, which did make me laugh! I am delighted to report that everybody is keeping well and I pray that we continue to be blessed with good health. It also made me realise how lucky we are as teachers to be able to interact with so many wonderful, unique little individuals on a daily basis when we are in school, and I genuinely cannot wait for the day that we are able to gather safely together again as a whole school community.

We did, however, find it difficult to get hold of a few of our parents this week, which obviously causes us some concern when we are not having daily contact with you. It is incredibly important to us to know that you are all safe and well and this is one of the reasons why we have decided to have fortnightly telephone calls with our children. As a school, we still want to offer our support and it is crucial that we are able to contact you. Teachers will once again be contacting children in their class next week, starting from next Monday 4th May. It has proven impossible to speak to every family on the same day, so teachers are working their way through the register and are contacting several families each day. Please tell your children not to be disappointed if a sibling has spoken to their teacher and they haven't- teachers will endeavour to speak to each child at some point during that week, but it could be any weekday. When teachers contact families, they have been instructed to withhold their personal number for safeguarding reasons, and so it will display on your screen as a private/ withheld number. We can of course understand you may not want to pick up your phone if you do not know who is calling, so the staff will leave a message saying that they will try again at another time. Please do pick up your phone and allow your child to speak to the teacher. The purpose of the call is not to be nosy or intrusive and we will not be enquiring as to how much work your child is doing- it is just so that your child knows that we still care and are here for all of our families should you need us. If a teacher is unable to contact a family during the week, they will inform me and I will attempt to contact you. If I am unable to speak to you by the end of the week, myself and Mrs Farmer will then need to conduct a home visit to ensure that families are safe and well. Given that social distancing measures are still in place, we would like to avoid this if at all possible, so please do ensure that you pick up the phone when school tries to call. We continue to have a duty of care to our children and we would really appreciate your co-operation.



It has been lovely to see so many of the activities children have been involved with during their time at home and sharing in your good news. Please keep sending photographs of special events such as children's birthdays, special work they have been doing or other important news, such as we had this week- the safe arrival of baby Ivy Rose Longmore on St George's Day, which we were so pleased to hear about. Please email any photographs, with a short description, to stjoseph@snewman.co.uk and we will share your news via our Facebook page, St Joseph's, Goldenhill. Thank you for all of the likes, follows, comments and messages to our new page- it is proving the best way to keep our families updated on a daily basis.

We have some good news of our own to share this week- we have achieved the Gold Excellence in Music Award. A special thank you must go to Mrs Cliffe for all of the fantastic music opportunities that she provides for the children of our school- it is a real testimony to her commitment and passion for music that we have been awarded such an accolade.

Friday 8th May should be the national May Day Bank holiday, which this year would have marked the 75th anniversary of VE Day. We would still like to celebrate this special occasion as a school and therefore, we are asking if your child could wear something red, white and/or blue on that day, and do something special, such as making Union Jack flags or bunting to hang outside, baking a celebration cake or even having a tea party in your garden (weather-permitting of course!) If you would like to send in photos of your family celebrating together, please do so- it would be lovely to have a virtual VE Day party! I'm sure class teachers will be thinking of other ways that your child could learn about VE Day in their weekly letters and class pages next week. I will be posting information on the Facebook page next week to remind you of this special anniversary so please do get involved if you can.

The Department for Education also launched their new online classroom, Oak National Academy, on Monday, which has a wealth of activities, videos on online lessons for your child to access for free. Teachers have been looking at this site this week and may be using some of the resources in their weekly learning. However, feel free to visit the site and explore yourself as there are some super learning opportunities on there to engage and educate your children. The web address is <https://www.thenational.academy/online-classroom> - you can then click on 'Subject', choose your child's class, pick a subject (Maths, English or Foundation- which includes all other curriculum areas) and access a huge array of content. I believe the website will be updated every Monday morning, which makes it difficult for teachers to plan for the week ahead, but it does seem well worth looking at if your child would like to do further learning.

As I have said in previous emails though, try not to worry too much if you are struggling with home learning- any practice of basic skills, particularly in Reading, Writing and Maths will help your child, as will spending time as a family learning real-life skills. The most important thing is that you all stay safe and happy and that we are all healthy and well when we return to school. Please do remember that we are here if you need any support or have any concerns for yourself, your own families or anybody else within the school community. You are still able to contact us at St Joseph's via telephone call during school hours call or via email or Facebook message.

This week's weekly worship with Dan and Emily from Onelife Music is now available at <https://youtu.be/H6nKkS4GwKs> should you wish to pray together as a family. Wishing you all health and happiness in the week ahead. I will keep all of our families in my thoughts and prayers. God bless you all.

Mrs R Wilson,

Acting Head of School.