

Keep up with learning

I am writing to provide clarity on what home learning will look like as we continue to move through this period of uncertainty. You may well be aware that a number of local schools have needed to close 'bubbles' of children and therefore this letter is intended to assist you with understanding our approach.

Since school resumed for all children in September, we have all recognised the benefits of being together for wellbeing, social development and for learning. Establishing a regular routine, albeit a slightly different one from the norm, has been really important and we are all focused primarily on wellbeing and then on enabling children to make as much progress as possible.

However, there is still a great deal of uncertainty and it is therefore pragmatic to prepare for different scenarios:

- 1 All children and staff are in the school and the teaching and learning can continue for everyone.
- 2 A class 'pod' or even the whole site or school need to quarantine and therefore learning needs to happen at home.
- 3 Most children are in school, but some children are absent due to suspected or Covid-19 related symptoms in their family or close contacts.

Ideally, St. John's is in scenario 1 for all or most classes and therefore all children receive a balanced diet of learning across the curriculum. However, a number of schools across the country have experienced scenario 2. For St. John's, we are already well placed to resume home learning using the Seesaw platform in EYFS-Y2 and Google Classroom in Years 3-6. Teachers would put lessons onto the platform, using some pre-recorded videos as before, and then would provide timely feedback to children each day. We would also resume class checks (via Zoom) and individual catch-ups to maintain some whole class contact. It should be noted that if a child needs to isolate for 10 days, but their class and teacher for 14 days, we would need the child to remain off and undertake home learning for the 14 days also, as their peers and teacher would not be in school.

The most likely scenario is number 3, which is actually the most challenging as teachers will be in school teaching full time to the majority of the class and simply do not have the capacity to run a full alternative home learning system in parallel. For absence of a few days, we have decided that teachers will upload the lessons that are undertaken in school to the relevant platform for children (and parents) to view and complete where this is feasible. This should allow children to pick up the learning from when they left school and complete work to enable them to more easily slot back in again when they return.

If it becomes clear that a child may be off for a longer period (10+ days) then we will most likely signpost parents to other resources, such as the Oak Academy, a national Covid-19 resource which has units aligned to the whole curriculum with video inputs and activities. You may want to take a look at the Oak Academy to familiarize yourself with the site so you feel a little more prepared so there is a link [here](#) to the site. The site may well be of interest to many parents to support home learning anyway so do take a look. Obviously if children are ill, there is no expectation to complete any work, but if they are well and isolating it is important that children try to keep pace with their peers.

Based on the feedback in the summer survey, we will also try and include more handwritten work to ensure writing stamina is maintained. In this survey live lessons were also raised, while these are not out of the question, they do present some challenges (not least with access to technology) and the evidence for effectiveness in primary schools is less positive. As always, we will continually review how things are going and will adjust and adapt our practice as we go along.

We recognise the challenges for parents with these scenarios and will support in any way we can; please do communicate with your child's teacher if we can help, be it with guidance or IT provision at home. We hope that by preparing for each eventuality, we will be able to respond swiftly and reduce any learning time that might be otherwise lost. Thank you for your continued understanding and support.

Kind regards

Justin Hoye

Headteacher