



Cottesmore St. Mary

Catholic Primary School

THE DIOCESE OF ARUNDEL AND BRIGHTON



Headteacher: Rachel Breen B.A. Hons.

20th March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

A huge thank you for your support at this challenging time. We hope that you are all keeping safe and well. Thank you to the various parents who have offered to come and help, support or even do shopping for us - the community spirit and kindness is heart-warming. I would also like to express huge thanks to the professionalism, commitment and flexibility of the staff at school and the never-ending sense of pride I have in leading such a dedicated, caring and supportive team. Over the coming weeks, we will aim to keep in touch as much as possible. Thank you for your continued support and understanding.

I would like to clarify the arrangements in place to support the children's learning at home while we are closed. We have already informed you that if you would like books or pens / pencils to work with at home then we are able to provide this. If you would like this equipment please see your child's class teacher after school or visit the office.

On Monday 23rd, teachers will be setting objective based learning for each subject, for each year group. This will be sent out by 11am Tuesday 24th March, at the latest. In the meantime, please refer to year group pages on the school website for the range of homework activities that can take place (Headteacher's Challenge, spelling rules, Timestable Rock Stars, Bug Club, My Maths, daily reading, Activity Passport, handwriting etc). Please also make reference to the attachments in this email (also being added to the school website) as these can also tide you over until the more formal weekly, objective based tasks are received. Also attached is a general list of websites where you can find resources to support your child's learning at home. We suggest that all these documents are used throughout the whole closure period.

The formal, objective based, weekly home learning will be sent in a grid format, separated by subjects. The tasks will mainly be non-computer based tasks. Tasks will be sent to you via PING every Monday by 11am. This task grid will also be placed on individual year group pages on our school website. No work will be sent home during the scheduled Easter holidays however, you can still refer to the general activity lists should you be looking for things to fill the children's day.

At the moment, the period of time that the school will be closed for is unknown. If this time period becomes more extensive, we will also use an online learning platform called SeeSaw where teachers can upload specific work for the children, and where children can also upload their work should they wish (we will also continue the learning grids as per next weeks for those without computers). Logins for this will be given to children in school today and emailed to other families next week. We will also send guidance regarding how to use the learning platform.

The focus of the formal, objective based, weekly home learning will, for now, largely be consolidating and revising objectives that have previously been taught in order to help the children retain information during the school closures. Should closures be extended, this will be reviewed.

We suggest that Maths and English is prioritised. However, all subjects will have weekly, guided tasks specified to complete at home. Maths will be differentiated using mild, spicy (age related) and hot (more of a challenge). Other tasks will differentiate by outcome or by the success criteria given from teachers. Teachers will ensure that they are as clear as possible in the tasks set, and, in Maths, methods will be given as an example. When working on Maths, you can also refer to our Calculation policy, found on our school website on each year group page, for further guidance. We will aim to secure the children's knowledge of number and calculation as much as possible. For children in Reception and Year 1, phonics tasks will also be set in order to support early reading skills. Links and resources will be suggested to support this at home. If you have a child in older years who you feel require some early KS1 phonics work, please do contact your child's class teacher.

In addition to sending out the general homework grid for each year group, we will send an extra grid called 'extra mild' for those children who have an identified Special Educational Need and are on our school register for additional support. These children are working significantly below age related expectations. You should know if this is your child as class teachers will have raised this in previous consultation meetings. If these tasks are too easy, then move to the general year group grid. For children with Education Health Care Plans (EHCP), you will be sent a range of further additional resources to support your child's attainment and individual targets.

Further support and signposting to resources for Bi-Lingual families and children with English as an Additional Language (EAL) will be also sent out and available on our school website. Translations in Arabic, Polish and Brazilian Portuguese are also available. Please contact annamullans@cottesmore.brighton-hove.sch.uk, if you have any further concerns regarding accessing the right support.

We would suggest that you consider how to manage a flexible daily timetable that works for you at home, based on your personal situation. Varying the type of activity in any one day is recommended, so that the children are not sitting down for long periods of time. We advise planning in breaks for children to play, exercise, rest and have family time as these are also of great importance during these challenging times. It is also recommended that you stick to their usual routine as much as possible.

For example,

Every Day							
08:40 – 9:00	9:00 – 10.15	10:15 – 10:30	10:30 – 11:30	11:30 – 12:15	12:00 – 1:00	1:00 – 2:00	2:00 – 3:00
Early activity such as handwriting or reading followed by a morning prayer.	English activities - phonics, spelling, writing, reading comprehension etc	Free play	Maths activities	RE, EPR or wellbeing	Lunch and free play followed by meditation	PE, Art / DT, music or drama	Computing, Science, History or Geography

Teachers will be contactable by email from 9am -10.30am daily to answer emails unless teaching a class. In this case, they will answer emails after 3pm. Teachers will be completing a range of other tasks during the remainder of each day or providing childcare for the children of key workers and eg vulnerable pupils (please see partial school opening letter dated 20th March for more information on this). Please be patient regarding responses.

Please avoid, if possible, emailing teachers with regards to eg how to solve and complete mathematical tasks unless it is unavoidable. As said above, examples and details will be given for all subjects and tasks will be designed to be self-explanatory. If you find that, post exploring these options, you are still requiring support then, of course, please email the class teacher. Teacher's email addresses can be found below.

Teacher Email Addresses

Reception	St Christopher : melistopcam@cottesmore.brighton-hove.sch.uk St Jude: alisoncoleshill@cottesmore.brighton-hove.sch.uk
Year 1	St Peter: Mon - Weds jomccartney@cottesmore.brighton-hove.sch.uk St Peter: Thurs – Friday colettefairbanks@cottesmore.brighton-hove.sch.uk St Catherine: felicitythomas@cottesmore.brighton-hove.sch.uk
Year 2	2 St Bernadette: katiemcfarland@cottesmore.brighton-hove.sch.uk 2 St Claire: jaynetearle@cottesmore.brighton-hove.sch.uk
Year 3	St Patrick: Mon – Weds zoerodway@cottesmore.brighton-hove.sch.uk St Patrick Thurs – Fri hayleymcguire@cottesmore.brighton-hove.sch.uk St Joan: jenniferwhiteley@cottesmore.brighton-hove.sch.uk
Year 4	St Francis: katalinszeless@cottesmore.brighton-hove.sch.uk St Andrew: charlottefletcher@cottesmore.brighton-hove.sch.uk
Year 5	St Cecilia: katewilkinson@cottesmore.brighton-hove.sch.uk St Stephen Mon – Weds bridgettelliott@cottesmore.brighton-hove.sch.uk St Stephen Weds – Fri fionabowles@cottesmore.brighton-hove.sch.uk
Year 6	St Martin laurawaters@cottesmore.brighton-hove.sch.uk St Paul Mon – Tues catherinemcloughlin@cottesmore.brighton-hove.sch.uk Weds – Fri : jenniferfletcher@cottesmore.brighton-hove.sch.uk

Please note that all national assessments have been cancelled including EYFS, Year 1 and 2 Phonics screening, Year 2 SATS and Year 6 SATS.

Whilst we of course would like children's learning to be retained and developed, we are also aware that this is a challenging time for all. Whilst parents' might be inclined to create a minute by minute schedule, it's important to remember that our children have never experienced anything like this before (much the same as us!). Although the idea of being off of school for four weeks, or more, might initially sound fun, the children are probably picturing a fun time like summer holidays, not the reality of being stuck at home, not seeing their friends.

Some children are just as concerned as adults are right now. They might have heard conversations at home and watched news regarding all that is going on around them. Over the coming weeks, you may see an increase in behavioural challenges with your children. Whether it's anxiety, anger, or protest that they can't do things normally - it may happen. This is normal and expected under these circumstances.

What children need right now is to feel comforted and loved and to feel like it's all going to be ok. That might mean that you do less of a 'perfect timetable' and spend a bit more time together. If you have outdoor space, play outside and, whilst we can, go on walks. Bake cakes (if you can find ingredients!), paint pictures, play board games, share stories, enjoy a science experiment together or find virtual trips of a museum – the Activity Passport, on each year group website page, has some lovely ideas as do many websites on our suggested list eg watch a sunset and snuggle under warm blankets and do nothing.

Please try not to worry about children regressing academically. Every single child is in the same situation and they all will be ok. When we are back in the classroom, we will all course meet them where they are and pitch work accordingly. Just be sensible about what is best for your child, your situation and your family. Everyone is in differing situations and we will support every single child as an individual learner both now and when they return.

If I can leave you with one thing, it's this - at the end of all of this, your children's mental health will be more important than their academic skills. How they felt during this time will stay with them long after the memory of what they did during the forthcoming weeks will be long gone. Please keep that in mind, every single day.

Love and prayers

Rachel Breen and the whole Cottesmore staff team.