

Wednesday 22 April 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

Summer Term 2020 - Welcome Back

Welcome back to school for the start of the Summer term after the Easter break. I hope that you and your families are keeping well and managing to stay in a positive mood despite the continuing lockdown. The term officially got underway this week and, although the school building remains closed to most of our children, we are very much open for business. The lessons and online learning activities for your children are now back in full swing.

We have had a small number of students (those who have been identified as vulnerable, have EHCPs or are the children of key workers) coming into school each day, including during the Easter break. I would just like to publicly thank the staff who gave up their time to volunteer to come in to school, to support these children during the holidays.

At this stage we do not know when the government will ask schools to re-open or what form that may take. There has been a lot of press speculation about this, but we have not received any information about when we may be asked to re-open. Please be assured that as soon as we know anything, we will share it with you so that you are fully informed.

Supporting our Community

I am aware that many of you are facing particular stresses and strains at the moment and I would like us to be able to support you, where we can. I know that some families are facing financial difficulties as a result of lay-offs and job losses. If you are in this situation then please do let us know so that we can see what practical support we might be able to provide.

For example, your son or daughter may now qualify for free school meals having not previously done so. Please contact us at schoolclosure@sjbc.wandsworth.sch.uk if you think that you may qualify now. If you are in receipt of free school meals but are having difficulties with the government's voucher system, please do also contact us so that we can alert the local authority to the issues.

If your child does not have IT equipment to do their work, then please do let us know. I am working with local organisations to source IT equipment and we are waiting to hear details about a government scheme to provide laptops. We can only help if we know there is a problem so please get in touch either by phone or using the email schoolclosure@sjbc.wandsworth.sch.uk to let us know.

I sent out a link to a handy guide for parents about educating children at home during the crisis and dealing with some of the inevitable stresses that this brings. If you have not seen our 'Coronavirus and Teenagers – A Handbook' yet, you can find it [here](#).

Online Learning

We are using Microsoft Teams to deliver our curriculum. I hope that your child is accessing this programme every day. Full details about how to do so is still available on our website. Learning materials and activities are being provided for each timetabled lesson and I would urge you all to make sure that your son/daughter is getting online and engaging with this work. It is vital that our students do not miss out on their learning during this period. Please do get in touch if they are having any technical problems, for example difficulties in logging on, by contacting our IT team by email at IT_helpdesk@sjbc.wandsworth.sch.uk

E-Safety

As I have said before with increased internet and social media usage, it is important that parents and guardians keep an even closer eye on their children's activities online and ensure their safety. Please see our website for E-Safety advice for parents.

Praying Together

As a Catholic, Christian community we still come together regularly to pray for one another despite the closures. You may have seen our opening mass of the school term on Monday morning on our [YouTube channel](#). We will celebrate mass together in this way every Friday morning at 9.00 am. Please do join us. Fr Saju and Fr Andrew are offering mass each day and if you would like to share any prayer intentions, for example to pray for any family members who might be unwell or are struggling with anxiety, please contact our chaplain, Fr Saju at sjohn@sjbc.wandsworth.sch.uk . You may also have seen our [weekly prayer guide](#) which Fr Saju has put together on the website which I hope that you will find helpful.

You might also have seen our very first [online assembly](#) in which the staff shared some positive and humorous messages based around our RUAH (Respect, Understanding, Affection and Humour) ethos. In these difficult and worrying times we want you and your families to know that the staff and school community are here to support you in whatever way that we can. If you have any ideas or suggestions for how we might do this, then please get in touch.

To conclude, I would like to assure you of the prayers and best wishes of all the staff at the school and to thank you for your continued support and messages of goodwill.

Yours faithfully



Mr P Dunne
Headteacher