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| ***Learning to Live, Living to Learn*** | **St John’s Primary School.**  **Teindland Close,**  **Newcastle upon Tyne,**  **NE4 8HE.**  **Telephone : 0191 – 273 5293** Fax : 0191 – 273 0651 **e. mail – tracey.caffrey@stjohns.newcastle.sch.uk**  **Headteacher : Tracey Caffrey** |

19th May 2020

Dear parents,

Thank you to those of you who have completed the online survey to let me know whether you intend to send your child back to school if we reopen next term. If you have not filled it in yet, please go to the News section of the school website or complete it from the link on Class Dojo, Facebook or Seesaw.

We are still waiting for more information from the government and the Local Authority before we will know whether it is safe for us to reopen from 8th June. I understand that many of you have concerns about the risk of infection and about how different school will look due to the new measures we have to put in place to try to keep children apart. We are working hard to meet the guidance put in place, but to do so in a way that doesn’t lose the warmth and welcoming atmosphere that makes our school special.

I hope to be able to tell you in the next week or so if your child is being invited back to school next half term.

Whether your child comes back into the school building for lessons next term or stays at home, we agree with the government that we need a return to the routine and structure of school. Many of you have encouraged your children to continue their learning on Seesaw, on websites such as Lexia and Reading Plus and by getting them to take part in the regular video calls which the teachers and support staff have been leading. If you haven’t been able to access learning online, you have collected work packs from school. You have cooked, done gardening, craft and played music. Thank you. Your children have impressed us so much with their enthusiasm for learning.

However, lots of you have told us that you have struggled with home-schooling and we understand. All children are different and you will have had other pressures to deal with too. It has been so difficult to keep to a routine and many of you prioritised your child’s well-being over arguments about school work. **This was the right thing to do and your child will not have fallen too far behind their friends because of this.**

None of us expected that we would be away from school for so long though. Now is the right time for us to increase our expectations about the learning that children will do if they remain at home each day. After half term, we will expect that every child from Reception to Year 6 completes **at least** one piece of maths and one piece of English (phonics for the younger children) each day. Teachers and support staff will deliver short ‘live’ lessons on Microsoft Teams and will set work that will be completed and uploaded before the next lesson. If your child is struggling and needs 1-1 support to complete the work, we can arrange for a direct video call so they can be supported through the task. Work will be matched to your child’s ability and will take account of any additional needs they might have. We don’t expect that your child’s ‘lessons’ and tasks at home would take more than one hour a day for the youngest children or two to three hours for the oldest.

**We will aim to take some of the pressure off parents and carers by putting the routine of video lessons and 1-1 support in place but we need your support to make sure that your child takes part and completes the tasks to the best of their ability. We can’t make your child do the tasks, but we hope you will see the value in what we are trying to do and will do your best to make it happen.**

To do this, we need all of the children to have access to Microsoft Teams. If your child’s teacher has not set this up yet, they will do so before we break up on Friday.

If you do not have a phone, tablet or laptop that your child can use, please let me know before Friday because we may be able to loan you a device. Video calls do use a lot of data so it is better that you use wifi to connect. If you do not have wifi and are worried about data use, please get in touch with me because we can possibly support you. We will schedule calls for different year groups at different times of the day, so that if your child has to share a device with a sibling, they still can.

We are going to try to avoid sending home paper packs of work after half term because we need to reduce the number of adults who are coming in to the school building, so it is important that we get online learning up and running for as many children as possible.

If you have any questions or comments, please email me at the address above. If you think that this is unmanageable or will cause you problems, please do let me know.

Take care



Mrs T Caffrey