



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Headteacher: Mrs Helen Armstrong
Diocese of Plymouth

8th January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

It seems an age ago since we all wished each other all best wishes for 2021 and I am sure that like me you are still in shock at what has happened this week. I know it has turned lots of your lives upside down and caused you to make lots of changes again.

I wanted to thank you for all the lovely messages we have received in school and to thank you for your continued support. We certainly did not want to have to make the rapid changes that we have had to make this week and it has required lots of understanding and patience from you.

As a school we have currently got two lots of work teams, those providing education for the vulnerable and critical worker children and those providing the remote education for all the children accessing from home.

We have been open all week and have taken as many children as we can. We continue to work under our strict risk assessment in order to ensure that both staff and children are kept as safe as possible. We have been grateful to those parents who have freed up days and places for other children over the last few days and we will continue to find as many places as possible. Please if you no longer need a place can you let school know so we can support other families also if there is someone working at home please can I ask you not to take a place. We really want to help as many parents as possible.

For those staff and children in school it is very cold and so we are encouraging the children to wear layers of clothing under their uniform eg thermal underwear and leggings, as well as brining perhaps wearing more than one school jumper, they also need wear coats, hats and gloves. Here is a picture sent to me last night of Miss Shaw in her layers!



The government expectations state that it is vital for all children to continue to receive their education whether at home or at school and we have to report this attendance. Therefore I have asked the teachers to set up a fun register on the 'Google Classrooms'. We are asking all children to ensure that they sign in on the register by 9.30am each day to ensure that they are fulfilling the rules on school attendance. We will use this attendance register to produce our report. Thank you for your support with this.



There will be a timetable for the work that needs to be completed each day but this does not mean that they have to set to work and do all their lessons straight away at that time as we fully understand that some of you will be accessing the Google Classroom and supporting your

"Inspiring each other to learn, in the light of Christ"

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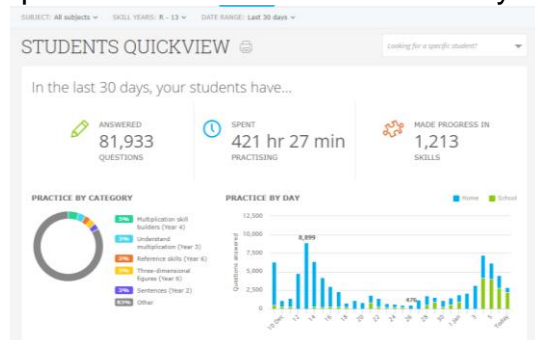
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child/children with their work at different times of the day. This is why the teachers have decided to use videoed lessons rather than live lessons so that you can access the learning when it is best for you and your family. We have had some very supportive emails in this week with positive suggestions of new things to try which we are sharing with the teachers, thank you for your ideas.

The children in school will be following the same curriculum and each week the teachers plan to set up a 'Google Meet' whereby those in school and those at home can meet with the teachers to discuss their learning together and see each other. The access details for this will be posted in the Google Classrooms. You will find the icon for Google meets in this box, it works in the same way as zoom.



Please do not forget about IXL. Next week we will also be using this to monitor the children's learning. The analytics enable us to see which children have been on each day, what skills they have completed, how long it has taken them and how well they did. Recent notifications have shown me that 81,933 questions were answered in 30 days!



Last term the children loved receiving their house points each week and finding out who had won. Therefore we intend to award house points for children for the work they complete in school with their remote education. If you feel your child needs to be rewarded with a house point for excellent attitude when completing a task or good behaviour at home then you can let the teacher know and he/she will add them on.



We continue to be at a very dangerous period of the pandemic; it is everyone's responsibility to play her/his part in keeping everyone as safe as possible. I thank you all for helping us with this.

Yours faithfully,

Helen Armstrong

Helen Armstrong
Headteacher