

St Andrew's Major Church in Wales Primary School

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Dear Parents/Carers

Tuesday 21st April 2020

It is now a month since I last wrote to you and feels very strange writing to you at a time when we would have been starting the summer term. I do hope this letter finds everyone fit and healthy and that you managed to enjoy Easter. I have enjoyed seeing some of your activities on Twitter – please do keep them coming - simply write @standrewsmajor in the body of your tweet and it will pop up for us to retweet to the school page.

Hub

All staff who are able continue to volunteer to work shifts in the Hub in Dinas Powys Primary School which is providing essential childcare for children of Key Workers 7 days a week. Only 3 children from our school are currently using the provision but the staff are also involved in looking after the children from the other Hub schools. Thank you to the staff who are putting themselves at risk to provide this service.

Distance Learning

You may have heard recent reports in the media that schools could be opening by 11th May. I confirm that this is not the case and the Welsh Government (who have jurisdiction over education here) have confirmed that there are no plans for the reopening of schools at the moment. Therefore, staff will continue to put work onto Hwb as indeed they have this week. We really do not want to add to what is an already stressful time but hope that the nature of the activities is such that they are manageable for you and your children at home.

The main focus for planned distance learning has been on literacy and numeracy which includes some formal activities. For topic, we have decided to take a more relaxed approach and for this fortnight we would love you to engage with the 'Hwb Heroes Assemble' project. Wales Education Minister, Kirsty Williams, has launched an initiative to get the children and young people of Wales using their creativity to spread positive and entertaining messages online to older people who are currently self-isolating due to the Covid-19 lockdown. Please click on the link to find out more <https://hwb.gov.wales/news/articles/dada8eac-9457-4099-9d8b-f0f5cedbc9ba>

As well as uploading to Hwb, please Tweet @standrewsmajor to let others see what you've been doing. I know many of the children engage with TT rockstars and Mrs Bounds has set up a pupils v staff competition (Y2 to Y6). Please encourage your child to take part and see if they can beat us! Information was added to class pages.

If you have any issues accessing or completing the work on Hwb, please remember you can contact your child's class teacher via the email addresses below. If you are struggling with the work due to it being online, please do email us and we will see if there is anything we can do to help. There have been a few requests for teachers to join online class video links e.g. through zoom. Unfortunately, I

have informed staff that this is not appropriate as it could put them in a compromising situation if for example they were to end up online with just one child. Therefore I politely ask that you do not request this of the staff.

Nursery (Mrs Bayliss)	BaylissJ26@hwbcymru.net
Reception (Mrs Lewis)	LewisK56@hwbcymru.net
Year 1 (Mrs Day – Mon-Weds / Mr Walters Weds-Fri)	DayL20@hwbcymru.net WaltersG@hwbcymru.net
Year 2 (Mrs Bounds)	HalseR2@hwbcymru.net
Year 3 (Miss Frangoulis)	FrangoulisS1@hwbcymru.net
Year 4 (Miss Bush)	BushJ21@hwbcymru.net
Year 5 (Mrs Owen Mon-Weds / Mr Mason Weds-Fri)	OwenH32@hwbcymru.net MasonP2@hwbcymru.net
Year 6 (Mr McNicol)	mcnicola@hwbcymru.net

If you need to contact the school for any other queries, the office staff and I will be able to receive the school emails on the usual address standrewsmajorps@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk
Admin staff are in school on Mondays to pick up messages so you can phone then if you would prefer.

Well being

During difficult times, we need to focus on the importance of well-being. Obviously physical health is paramount but we need good mental health in order to give us the resilience to cope with the present situation and with what may lie ahead. There are many examples of advice and tips on the internet but these are some that I think useful.

- ✓ Talk to your children, and answer their questions. Ask about what they have heard about the virus and the situation so that you can correct possible misconceptions and reassure them.
- ✓ Avoid being too immersed in media coverage. Be mindful of the amount of things you are reading and watching, including social media – as this may add to worry and anxiety. Consider a few updates every day from trusted sources.
- ✓ Remember that people react differently to significant events. Some people – adults and children – may feel worried, some excited, some nothing much at all. Be reassured that different reactions are normal and ok.
- ✓ If your child seems worried, it may be good to distract them with something that takes their mind off their worries. You might also want to set aside 10-15 minutes each day for them to talk about any worries and to reassure them.
- ✓ Remember to keep things positive and give children hope. For example, tell children that now many people are working to make this better and that even though it is serious, everyone is doing their best to help people.
- ✓ Try to keep familiar routines. Well-known routines in everyday life provide security and stability.

- ✓ Do nice things together, and keep active. Make a plan and suggest some regular family times where you can play games, do some exercise together, or do other things that you know most of you like. Try to find a good balance between time together, and screen time.
- ✓ Keep in good contact with family and friends (via Zoom, Facetime, Skype WhatsApp etc.) This will help children connect with others and know that others are thinking about them. It will also reassure them that others are well.
- ✓ As a parent you may be concerned yourself. Take care of yourself, cut yourself some slack and make sure you have breaks, time to relax, and ask for help from others if you need to.

We will ensure the children catch up academically (if needed) when we return to school. What is more important is avoiding any form of mental trauma or anxiety which can be long lasting, is much more difficult to fix and has a detrimental impact on learning. Staff will be phoning some parents and pupils in the future to check in with you and the children but in the meantime if there is anything we can do to support you, please do get in touch. We may not have all the answers, but the Local Authority may be able to point us in the direction of someone who does. We are here, as always, to support you and your families.

Take care of yourselves and each other and stay safe.

Yours faithfully,



Gen Hallett

*Lord Jesus,
When you walked with us on earth, you spread your healing power.
We place in your loving care all who are affected by Coronavirus.
Keep us strong in faith, hope and love.
Bring relief to our sick, console our bereaved and protect those who care for us.
We lift our prayer to you Lord and trust in your infinite mercy.
Amen.*

