

# St James' Primary School

Main Road, Biddenham MK40 4BD

Telephone: 01234 352721

Email: [office@stjamesvaschool.co.uk](mailto:office@stjamesvaschool.co.uk)

Website: [www.stjamesprimary.org.uk](http://www.stjamesprimary.org.uk)



**ST JAMES'**  
PRIMARY SCHOOL

23.3.2020

Dear Parents,

Firstly, I want to say **thank you** to all of you who have heeded the Government advice to keep your children at home unless you need to. Doing so, has really helped us manage what is a difficult situation much more effectively, and also has allowed me to send most staff home, where they, too, can stay well and safe. I also, however, need to pay tribute to the staff here – nearly every member of staff arrived at school this morning, prepared to do whatever was needed to make things work for our children, despite their own fears and concerns – their commitment and dedication is truly inspiring, and we are blessed to have them here. We will be doing everything we can to support those families who are working in our community to keep us all safe, and at school today we have children of medics, emergency services, and social care – **it is a great privilege to support these people.**

The main point of this letter is to clarify how we will stay in touch with you and your children over the coming weeks.

On **Monday lunchtimes**, we will update the class pages on our school website with details of further home learning for your children. In addition to class teachers setting activities for you to do, I will also be setting a weekly 'special' (see attached for this week's 'Special')

We have set up **email addresses** for you to use to send us examples of work, photographs, messages etc for each class. These will be monitored by class teachers regularly, but not necessarily every day. Please do not use these emails for requests of information and support, as we can't guarantee timely responses, and if class teachers are unwell, they obviously won't be able to respond. Please continue to use the [office@stjamesvaschool.co.uk](mailto:office@stjamesvaschool.co.uk) email address for questions/your main point of contact.

The email addresses are [Reception@stjamesvaschool.co.uk](mailto:Reception@stjamesvaschool.co.uk), [Year1@stjamesvaschool.co.uk](mailto:Year1@stjamesvaschool.co.uk), [Year2@stjamesvaschool.co.uk](mailto:Year2@stjamesvaschool.co.uk), [Year3@stjamesvaschool.co.uk](mailto:Year3@stjamesvaschool.co.uk), [Year4@stjamesvaschool.co.uk](mailto:Year4@stjamesvaschool.co.uk), [Year5@stjamesvaschool.co.uk](mailto:Year5@stjamesvaschool.co.uk), [Year6@stjamesvaschool.co.uk](mailto:Year6@stjamesvaschool.co.uk)

We would like to be able to share examples of children's home learning with our wider school family, so where we have photo permissions, we will upload these onto the website and tweet throughout our closure.

In terms of home educating your children, it may be helpful for me to remind you of a few things – firstly, you are your child's **first and most important** educator. You have taught and will teach them way more than any teacher will do.

**Trust your judgement and instinct.** Secondly, we know that working 1:1 with a child is intense and hard work – remember to give yourselves and your children a break – they do not need to be working solidly on 'school work' every day, all day. When you're finding it difficult, please remember that we, too, would find it difficult and tiring! The work we have sent out is a suggestion of what you might do, there is **no expectation at all that it must all be done.** Essential daily tasks include reading (especially for youngest children), some writing (maybe the children could keep a diary just like Samuel Pepys did?) and some maths practice. Please supplement this with lovely activities that you can enjoy also – maybe learn new skills together (knitting?), baking, gardening, model making, crafts from the 5 minute crafts team. All of these are worthy activities which will benefit children for years to come.



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It is important that our school family stays connected throughout the coming weeks. We will also use our website to keep you up-to-date with what children in school are doing. They've named themselves the Rainbow Club! I will also be regularly tweeting, @StJamesHead and I also plan to keep up with a weekly newsletter.

There are lots of people and organisations who are creating websites/youtube channels/resources to support families who have children at home – we will upload links to as many of these as we can, but please be aware that we have not quality assured any, so you might need to check suitability first.

We continue to have **safeguarding** responsibilities – if you have any safeguarding concerns, please do email me at [head@stjamesvaschool.co.uk](mailto:head@stjamesvaschool.co.uk), if you become aware of any welfare issues regarding any child (not just a St James' child) and I will be able to either take action myself or advise you further.

If in doubt, please make the school website your first port of call – we will be uploading all sorts of information there.

You can still contact us by phone or email, but please be aware we might not respond immediately. We are having to prioritise very quickly in an ever changing situation, and we also expect staff to become unwell or need to self isolate in the coming weeks, all these things will affect our ability to respond immediately. Please bear with us and be patient – thank you!

We are here every day for the time being, so if you do go on a walk (socially distanced, of course!), do come and wave at us through the doors! Rainbow Club is in the Hall, and although we might not be able to come out and see you, we can still be in contact at a safe distance, we'd love to see you! **REMEMBER TO BE SAFE & FOLLOW SOCIAL DISTANCING RULES**

I think this letter has covered most things; there will be something I've forgotten or not yet thought about; this is a highly unusual situation, and I am conscious that there are many answers I haven't yet thought of. What is most important is that we all make it through the next few weeks (months?) and look forward to when we will all be back together. Stay safe and well.

Very best wishes,

Maria Soulsby

## Ms Soulsby's Special Work...



Make a rainbow.

Put the rainbow in a front window of your house.

When walking around our community, count up how many rainbows you spot.

Send me photos of your rainbows [head@stjamesvaschool.co.uk](mailto:head@stjamesvaschool.co.uk)

Spot your rainbow on our school website.

Spread joy and hope, remembering our Rainbow Promise – that we are loved and will love.

*'It takes a village to raise a child.'*

