

Dear Parents,

I hope that you and the children are all well and staying safe during this worrying time. It's so unfortunate that it has been necessary to close schools and move to remote learning again but the health and well-being of all has to be a priority and, hopefully, community transmission rates of the virus will be brought under control and we will be in a position to reopen in the near future.

In the meantime, the planning is well underway for supporting the children and their learning for the coming weeks. As part of our contingency planning for this eventuality, we have been building familiarity for teachers, children and parents with the online platform, Seesaw, over the period from September to December. This was to ensure that, if a period of remote learning was required, we would be well placed to take advantage of the functionality this platform provides. This should make it immeasurably easier to share suggested activities and tasks more regularly and in more manageable chunks to avoid anyone becoming over-whelmed. It also facilitates the easier submission of completed work and the provision of feedback from the teachers, as you are probably already aware.

In contrast to the last period of enforced school closure, we have been given permission to facilitate the collection of books and materials by the children straightaway. We will share the plan as to how this will be facilitated, mindful of keeping congregations to a minimum, in due course.

The class teams have been meeting to co-ordinate the plans for the coming weeks and they will be communicating those directly to you. Rest assured, we will be working hard to support the children and you during this period. We are very mindful of the need to maintain a sense of connection for the children with each other and with us. To that end, I have attached the protocols we have for the Zoom calls with the children as I know some calls have already been scheduled for Monday.

If I could offer the following advice

- having a structure to the day for the children is important but there also needs to be flexibility with that structure as opposed to strict adherence to it (I have attached the suggested schedule we shared back in March which may be of some assistance)
- it is impossible for you to try and replicate the classroom/school experience so don't put yourself under pressure to do so
- you can only do your best in circumstances that are less than ideal least of all for the children

We are very conscious of the burdens on parents at this time and we will do our best to get the balance right in terms of supporting and extending the children's learning. In the meantime, mind yourselves and please give our best wishes to the children.

Kind regards,

Brian O'Doherty
Principal