



St Margaret's Academy

Dear Parents,

This week in school, we have had a focus on internet safety. Tuesday was national Internet Safety Day and the theme this year is *Reliable* which is so relevant in our new world of 'fake news'. We use SMART to help children stay safe in the online world. Hopefully you had a chance to view my assembly and discuss this important topic with your child. As a reminder here are the signposts and reminders that might be of help to you:

- *Think You Know* website (linked to our school website home page)
- Kara, Winston and the SMART Crew on www.childnet.com
- www.saferinternet.org
- Being curious about your child's on-line world is a really good way of helping stay in touch with what they're up to. Try open questions like, "do you ever come across anything that worries you online?"

As a school we have certainly worked hard to improve our practice since the previous lockdown. Our IT team has been amazing behind the scenes, providing you and staff with expert help and enabling the rapid roll out of 38 Chromebooks (with more to come after half term). With reading being such an essential part of improving children's life chances, our teaching assistants have been delivering many 1:1 and small group phonic sessions, remotely and in-school which should help make a real difference in stopping any gaps widening further.

Teaching assistants have also been delivering speech and language sessions in a similar way to the phonics which will again really help. Our Hearing Support Centre staff have helped ensure our hearing impaired pupils have been able to engage in school. Our pastoral team has been fantastic as ever, keeping in touch with so many of you through phone calls, email, cards, video calls and small groups in school. Teachers' juggling teaching in school while also simultaneously providing learning for home is quite amazing and I know much appreciated by you. Behind the scenes our super admin staff keep everything moving seamlessly and help to make sure those of you who need extra help in many ways get it, such as with the food parcels.



While the challenge of lockdown will inevitably have caused many increased stresses, I hope our collaboration between home and school has helped reduce these as best as possible. Having navigated yourselves through 6 weeks of lockdown pressures, you might be thinking of having some fun and special time with your children this half term. Mrs Essam, our Nurture lead teacher has put together 136 fun therapeutic activities that you could try, designed for fun, laughter and building relationships. It's called [Theraplay Activity List](#) and you can find it on our website under 'Well-being in Action' – 'Resources for Parents' or by clicking the link.

Our site staff continues to do a very thorough job cleaning all the time, like painting the Forth Bridge. The kitchen staff have provided hot meals and our super MTAs have been out and about playing games with children at lunchtime to keep them busy.

Thank you to all our brilliant, caring staff.

School Displays

For those of you who don't get into school here is a picture of a new wonderful values display in the front entrance to the school. Thank you to our Arts Lead, Mrs Bindon, who organised, created this and displayed it this week.



And here's a picture of the display that celebrates the work our Reception children have been doing about Chinese New Year recently.

Places in School

We still don't know the government's plans for when school will reopen fully and await more information on 22nd February. In the meantime, we know that learning will continue as it currently does for at least 2 weeks after half term. If you need your child in school because you are working, please can I appeal to you to only book a place for the days you are not at home. This will help give us a tiny bit of capacity to support some families who are desperate for just 1 or 2 days a week.

COOKING ON A BUDGET

If you are looking for inspiration or guidance on how best to spend your FSM vouchers or just looking to stretch the budget a bit further, a Devon chef has been using social media to share free recipes for families on how to cook delicious meals on a budget. Ash from Curious Kitchen in Brixham wants to help provide a little relief for families and hopes this will help people stretch that £ a bit further whilst picking up a few cookery tips along the way. Check out Ash's instagram page. He will also be launching a new online series of cookery demonstrations [#cookingwithash](#). Instagram - [@chef_ash_hamilton](#)



Uniform

After half term we are asking children to return in school uniform tops; tops only, bottoms of your choice. This is to help return to normality and remind us of our school identity while having their own bottoms will make it easier for physical and outdoor activities by reducing the need to change.



Support from Torbay Children's Services

Hopefully you managed to read the message from Children's Services that went out in a letter yesterday. I've added the letter to our website on the '[Supporting Families](#)' page under 'Well-being in Action' for your reference. Some headline reminders from the letter:

- For online help and anonymous support head to www.kooth.com.
- If you feel a child is in immediate danger, please call 999.
- If you are worried about a child please call the Torbay Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub on 01803 208100 or email mash@torbay.gov.uk. Out of hours please call 0300 4564 876.
- Alternatively you can contact Torbay Community Helpline 01803 446022.
- If you are a young person worried about your own safety or that of a friend call 01803 208100. If you need someone to talk to call Childline on 0800 1111.

Torbay Council also offers a range of services that you might find useful to help you over half term. This is the link to their page:

<https://www.torbay.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/public-health/coronavirus/coronavirus-support/> The direct phone line is 01803 446022, open 10.00-6.00 Monday to Friday and 9.30-12.30 Saturday.

If you are pregnant or have a child under the age of 4 you might be eligible for these vouchers from the local authority. Check out the link here: <https://www.torbay.gov.uk/news/pr8286/>

HANDS – FACE – SPACE and ACT AS IF YOU'VE GOT IT – useful mantras to keep us all safe.

Have a restful, safe and enjoyable half term. You deserve it.



Tim Hughes
(Headteacher)

REMINDERS

If you have a booked a keyworker session and you no longer need the provision, please cancel the session on the school gateway or inform the office. This will enable the sessions to free up for others that may need them

Office Hours after half term are 8.15am -3.30pm

If your child is in school after half term and would like a hot meal please book this via the school gateway

