

Barewell Road

Torquay

Devon TQ1 4PA

admin@st-margaret's.torbay.sch.uk

01803 327090



Coronavirus Update #11

15th May 2020

Dear Parents,

Following Boris's announcement last Sunday, we are preparing to move into a new phase of education to help support the new *Stay Alert* message and do our bit for helping bring the country back online. For St Margaret's, this refers to Boris's plan for all children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 to return to school full-time on Monday 1st June after half term along with vulnerable children in other years and those children of critical workers.

Yesterday I met virtually with all the primary Head Teachers from across Torbay along with members of the Local Authority education team and various professional advisors. Together we are agreeing a collective way forward but based on our individual risk assessments for each school. Here at St Margaret's we have an initial draft plan that we are working through with staff and governors. I will be writing to you on Wednesday next week with detailed information for our 1st June plans.

In the meantime, please be reassured that the risk to children from catching Covid-19 is assessed as very low. We are however paying very careful attention to the safety of children and staff in all of our planning.

The rationale for returning younger children sooner than others is based on the early years being fundamental for learning key skills that will form the building blocks to future development both academically and socially. For those in Year 6 it is about providing them with time to best prepare for secondary and say goodbye to friends.

We are open over half term as normal for vulnerable children and children of critical workers. Parents of these children can book on as normal over the school Gateway. Once we have finalised our 1st June plans we will open bookings up for this week for these groups.

If your child is in school, please do send in a healthy snack for their morning play as there's no free fruit at the moment.

Support for Mental Health

During this coronavirus period, concerns around mental health are one of the big challenges we all face, to varying degrees. Confined indoors without meeting other people and left alone with our own thoughts is really hard. Next week is Mental Health Awareness Week with a focus on being kind

KINDNESS RESPECT RESPONSIBILITY ASPIRATION

to others. Being kind is one of the 5-a-day mental health activities that keep us happy. See the well-being section of our website to find out more or click this [direct link](#).

If you are interested in some special time to help with your well-being, one of our lovely parents, Nina Adwick is offering free virtual yoga, meditation and mindfulness sessions. If you are interested, Nina can be contacted on www.nurturebynina.co.uk / 07847 244810 and you can find out more on the 'Supporting Families' page on our website as described above or by [clicking this link](#).

Home Learning

The [Information for Parents](#) section under *Home Learning* has been updated with Forest School Activities you can do at home.

With so much work now being done online, please find attached with this letter an up-to-date and useful online safety guide. You can also find it in under 'Well-being in Action' – 'Supporting Families' or by clicking this [direct link](#). Remember, our home page also has an excellent feed to all sorts of related online safety guidance.

Covid-19 – Updated to Stay Alert

The key message has now changed to **stay alert** which means you must stay at home as much as possible, work from home if you can, limit contact with other people, keep at least 2 metres apart from others if you go out and wash your hands regularly.

The message is still the same if you have a new and continuous cough or a high temperature. In this case stay at home for 7 days if you live alone, stay at home for 14 days if you live with others, including all household members. Only use NHS 111 if your symptoms get worse or are no better after isolation. Guidance on what to do while staying at home if you have suspected coronavirus can be found here by clicking this link to the [NHS website](#).

The most up to date guidance for parents can still be accessed via this link and it includes lots of questions and answers that you might find useful:

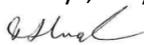
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

Department for Education helpline for parents - phone: 0800 046 8687,
Email: DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk, opening hours: 8am to 6pm (Monday to Friday) and 10am to 4pm (Saturday and Sunday)

Updates on COVID-19 can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

For games and resources about good hygiene and bugs, try the e-bug website which is being run in conjunction with Public Health England. [Click here](#).

As always, very best wishes to you and your families,


Tim Hughes (Headteacher)

KINDNESS RESPECT RESPONSIBILITY ASPIRATION