

Barewell Road
Torquay
Devon TQ1 4PA



admin@st-margarets.torbay.sch.uk

01803 327090

Coronavirus Update #20 – Final Parent Letter of 2019/2020

17th July 2020

Dear Parents,

Hopefully you have had a chance to read our plans for reopening in September which were emailed to you yesterday and can be found on our website. Just to be clear, ***these plans are highly unlikely to have any major change before September so please do make your personal and work plans accordingly.*** (The only reason for a big change will be if we need to go back into lockdown which we have contingency plans in place.) There are likely to be some small changes however. I will email these final updated arrangements to you on Friday 4th September.

It is incredible to realise that it has been 119 days since our last day of full time education for all pupils on 20th March. So many changes that have taken place in this time, both in school, in our home lives and across Torbay, the country and the world. It's hard to imagine we were so absorbed with Brexit and a general election before this time, and that we battled with something as mundane as winter rains. Much that came before has now been swept away as we prioritise and adjust to life in the pandemic.

We've learnt a lot during these days that we can take forward into September. Our understanding of how to stay healthy is much improved from a time when we perhaps took catching a cold for granted and unavoidable. Now we avoid contact with people who have symptoms. We have much improved personal hygiene, we wash our hands better and we are more sensible in our contact and mixing with others. All these are factored into our plans for full opening in September.

Staff have been making good use of yesterday and today to prepare their classes and the school environment for welcoming back all children in a manner that includes our improved understanding of the virus and reflects the government guidance.

We've developed a greater understanding and use of technology that has changed our working practice for the better and helps us provide a better educational offer for your children.

We have learned a lot from our experience of home learning. Your constructive feedback in the surveys, along with our pupil and staff surveys has really helped us understand what we've done well and how we can improve this offer if we end up back in lockdown. I shared this information with governors at our end of year meeting on Tuesday this week.

If we go into lockdown again, we will restart home learning with an offer that matches the school-based curriculum. Mrs Turner will lead on this for Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. Mr Marchant will be leading this for Years 3, 4, 5 and 6.

We will also be exploring how we use the best of remote learning to enhance our school-based curriculum when all children are in school e.g. by using *Google Classroom* for homework for example.

School Office Staff

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our amazing office staff. Throughout these 119 days, they have been the engine and gearing working behind the scenes to make sure everything runs smoothly and successfully for you, children and staff. They are a fantastic team.

Sites and Cleaning Staff

I would also like to thank our sites staff. As you can imagine, the expectations on them have been much increased over the last 119 days. They have taken everything in their stride, responded quickly and flexibly to different needs and ensured a safe site for staff and pupils.

Summer Holiday Guidance and Support

Our wonderful pastoral team, headed up by Mrs Pike, has already made arrangements to keep in touch with a few of you over the holiday. If you feel you would like us to keep in contact with you, please do let the office know by the end of the day on Tuesday 21st July.

While school is closed over the summer holiday, there are several holiday clubs and providers offering child care. The local authority has kindly collated all these into one place which I have uploaded to our website under 'Well-being in Action' – 'Supporting Families' – 'Summer 2020 Holiday Provision'. Or you can get there with this [quick link](#).

The *Think U Know* site that provides the feed to our internet safety *Parent Info* on our website home page has provided a social media activity pack and video guide for parents

that you might find useful considering all the rapid changes that occur in this area. Here's the direct link:

https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/is-my-child-ready-for-social-media/?utm_source=Thinkuknow&utm_campaign=097f621f2b-TUK_ONLINE_SAFETY_AT_HOME_14_06_20&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_0b54505554-097f621f2b-64872885

If you are looking for any support or guidance over the holiday, I highly recommend the Local Authority coronavirus information page on the Torbay website. It contains local and national updates as well as specific help under the following categories:

- Advice and support for businesses
- Support for individuals and households
- Community help and support
- Local outbreak management plan

Here's the direct link: <https://www.torbay.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/public-health/coronavirus/>

Note that the Department for Education helpline (phone: 0800 046 8687, email: DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk) will only be open Monday to Friday over the holiday, 8am to 6pm.

Here's a quick link to all government advice: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

For the latest information on *test and trace*, follow this link:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/nhs-test-and-trace-if-youre-contacted-after-testing-positive-for-coronavirus/>

As it becomes compulsory to wear a mask in shops from 24th July, I have added a guide to our website for parents on how to help your child wear a mask properly. You can find it under 'Well-being in Action' – 'Coronavirus Updates, Guidance and Help' or by following this [quick link](#). Please note it is only statutory for adults and children aged 11 and over but in case you intend to use one with your child, the guide is here for your information.

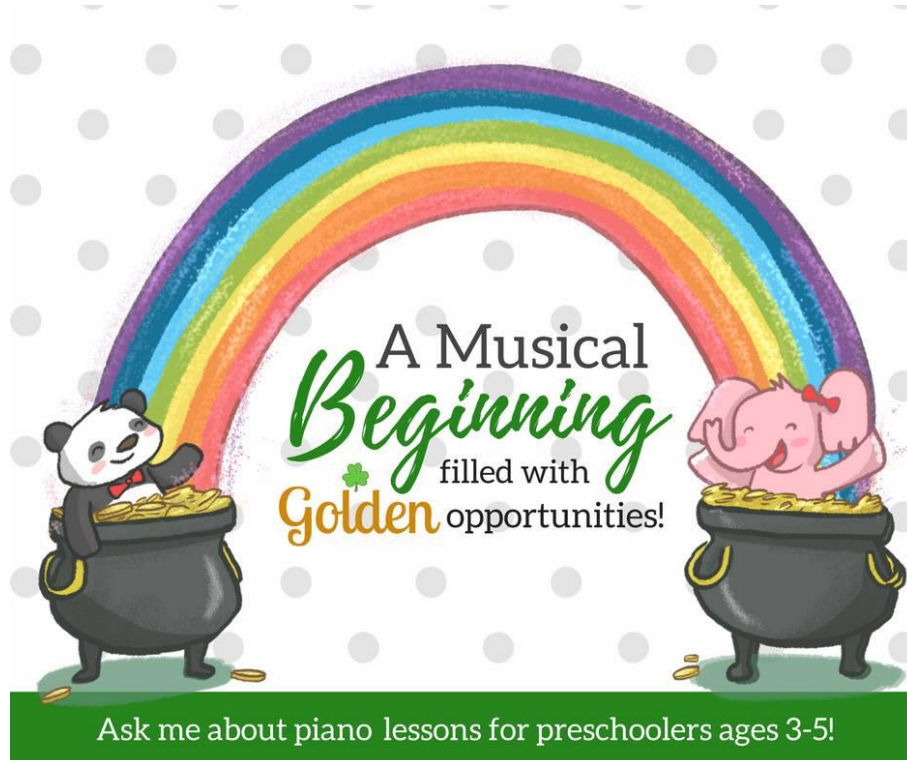
For those of you with children in Year 6 *KOOTH.com* is available for young people aged between 11 – 25 years to access over the summer. It is a confidential service offering support for their emotional health and wellbeing in a safe and secure manner. There is a transition video for those in Year 6 that can be accessed [here](#) where you will need to choose the video named 'Transition Vid' (Carina).

Clubs in September

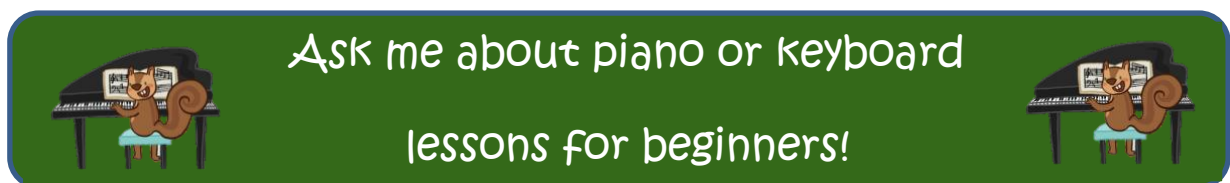
We will still be offering a range of clubs next year from Year 1 to Year 6. Look out for the letter from Mr Mayling that will be coming out next Tuesday for you to book.

Do you have a child who would like to learn to play the piano or keyboard?

Miss Page is offering lessons in the Autumn term



Please email: page_k2@sky.com to find out more



Dunelm Winners

In some surprise good news, last week we found out we were very lucky when we received a telephone call from Dunelm informing us that we had won a prize in their Dunelm Community Support Facebook Group giveaway. The idea was to nominate a school and tag a member of staff. The more TAGs and nominations the school got, the more times they were entered to receive a prize to brighten up our staffroom. We were obviously very popular with votes! A lady from Dunelm delivered a huge bundle of goodies – toaster, kettle, glasses, cutlery...and the list went on. It was a great surprise and as you can imagine

4

KINDNESS RESPECT RESPONSIBILITY ASPIRATION

we were thrilled. Thank you to Dunelm for organising this and thank you to all who voted for us.

The timing of this couldn't have been better because from September we will be moving to two staffrooms to support social distancing. So now we have all we need for our Woodland Den staffroom

On Monday and Tuesday next week we are looking forward to focussing on our core job when teachers and teaching assistants take part in curriculum training. After that we will be closed until Thursday 3rd September. Children's first day back is Monday 7th September.

I wish you all a wonderfully enjoyable summer holiday.

Finally, I'll hand over to our Year 3s who spent part of this last week with Mrs Essam and Mrs Stoneman putting together a special message in sign and words wishing everybody a happy summer holiday. It's the last entry in this month's LET'S SMILE page. [Click this link.](#)

Very best wishes to you all,



Tim Hughes (Headteacher)