



Friday 3rd April 2020

Dear parents,

I hope that you are all keeping safe and well. We are missing seeing you and your children in school but during these challenging times, the staff and I have loved seeing all of the work and activities that your children are doing at home. We love to see the photos, videos and pictures- keep them coming!

Easter Activities



All teachers have provided some suggestions for Easter activities and these have been sent out on Dojo but are also available on the school website. Please use and adapt these ideas as you wish. The children have worked so hard for the last two weeks and they will now need some unstructured time to really relax and re-energise.

Home Learning

I know that as we end our second week, learning at home has been a worry for many of us. I wanted to give my thoughts as Head Teacher and parent of three school aged children (2 primary and one secondary). I was inspired to write this by a Head Teacher in Leicestershire who has shared a similar message with parents.



- 1) This is not home schooling- we are responding to a global emergency which has impacted on all aspects of our lives- health, finance, work, education, relationships and more. It is important to bear that in mind. Home schooling is a way of life which has been considered and planned for. We are trying to support 'remote' or 'distance' learning.
- 2) You are, and always have been, your child's primary educator. We have sent out lots of work and our teachers are doing a phenomenal job updating Class Dojo and preparing work for the children. There is a suggested timetable which you can follow but if you decide that your child needs something different on some days, such as baking, reading, playing outside or doing something creative then it is your right to provide them with an alternative way of learning. There is nothing to feel guilty about.
- 3) Many of you may be working from home and trying to educate at the same time. I fully empathise with this situation. I have tried this personally and this has been a real challenge. Working, parenting and teaching are three different jobs that cannot be



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done at the same time. I have found that focussing on more guided learning activities (taken from the pack) in the morning and then free, less guided activities in the afternoon have kept my children in a routine which is more easily manageable. I, personally, have valued a daily routine of getting up, breakfast and then settling to work.



- 4) If you are working from home perhaps you could show your child how to compose an email; role play a business meeting; how to file things etc. These are all amazing learning experiences. There are countless other things that you can engage your child in around the home which will teach them so much. Share your ideas on our facebook page with #lifeskills.

My Ideal for all St Francis children

- My absolute number 1 is that children read every single day. There are so many amazing free resources out there at the moment which we have shared on Dojo
- Some free writing each week- maybe a story, daily diary or a comic
- Practical and hands on Maths via cooking, Maths games (be that physical or digital) or any other medium you can think of
- Physical exercise every day- a short walk/cycle can be just what is needed
- Some art/music at some point during the week
- Fine motor work- cutting, sticking, lego, playing with small toys
- Lots of free, imaginative play, the more independent the better (especially for younger children)

What teachers will provide after Easter

All teachers have compiled home learning packs for the first two weeks after Easter. These are all available on the website, or will be very soon. There is a suggested daily timetable and then activities to match. As I have stressed, these are a guide and you can use as much or as little of these things as you wish but please refer back to my 'ideal' for all children as a minimum. You can download the packs yourself- they often link to online resources. If you cannot print (you don't have to- children can record on paper) you can pop to the school office and pick up a physical pack which will be copied on demand. This will be available after the Easter break. We are looking into 'live' lessons through online platforms but we are getting used to using these platforms ourselves first and are looking around for the best solutions for our school community. From all accounts, class dojo is working well. If you are not fully set up then please contact us for details.

Easter Services

As a Catholic community, Easter is the most important liturgical season of all. This Easter we cannot attend Mass, Stations of the Cross or confessions. Instead, we are called to act out our faith by being good citizens, to protect and serve the most vulnerable in our society.

Please see <https://www.facebook.com/MeltonCatholics/> for information about live streaming of Mass over the Easter period.

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Some guidance from Pope Francis on what to do when you can't get to Confession:

-  Speak directly to God, tell Him your sins.
-  Ask His forgiveness with all your heart with an act of contrition.
-  Promise Him you will go to confession when you can.



Thought for Easter

During a homily at a worldwide moment of prayer led by Pope Francis, he reflected on how Coronavirus has united us in our common humanity, as brothers and sisters.

“We have realized that we are on the same boat, all of us fragile and disoriented, but at the same time important and needed, all of us called to row together.”

Let us think about how we can show unity with our brothers and sisters. What can we do for someone else to support or lift them up in this time of crisis? I have been heartened by stories and pictures of people in our school community supporting our NHS and doing acts of kindness to help those who are isolated and feeling alone. Our #stfrancissaviours are busy dog-walking and collecting shopping and prescriptions for the vulnerable. We are all in the same boat and we are all called to row together. What could you do to answer God's call?

Finally, I would like to wish you all a restful and happy Easter. Despite the circumstances, I hope that you find time to relax and rest as a family. If you have any issues at all, please contact me by email on gbrown7@st-francis.leics.sch.uk and I will try to get back to you as soon as possible. This is a worrying time and I want you to know that we are all in this together- if there is anything at all that I can help with to minimise any stress and anxiety, please do get in touch. The children pick up on so much so it is vital that we look after ourselves too. Thank you so much for all of your support with this new way of working as a school and in advance for your continued support.

God bless you and your families this Easter,

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Mrs Brown

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