

Pupil information: Monday 30th March 2020

Dear kids

Hope you all remember who I am! My calendar helps remind me of all your smiling faces. It feels like AGES since I last saw you all. At assembly I usually have 3 things I want to talk about. Today my 3 things are....

1. The Past

I know the last day you were all in school you were dressed in green and singing St Patrick's Day songs. What a lovely memory to have! I know many of you are worried that you will not get to say goodbye to your teachers, classrooms and what you have left behind. I understand that is important and I will help you with those feelings. If school doesn't begin again until September, I will make time for you to say goodbye properly to your old classes. And as for our Y7s...we will plan something very special for all of you, too. I promise.



2. The Present – named because it is a gift to enjoy

I hear lovely stories about how you are all working so hard at home. Enjoy this time! I also know that your home is a home, not a school or classroom. Remember it is not...*the army*! If you want to spend a bit longer on something or come back and finish something tomorrow, that is ok. Read the lovely messages on the website from your teachers. They also want you to go and enjoy being outside. Some have even given you ideas for how you can learn outside, too. Just keep trying your best. Remember to keep your things tidy. Put your books and things away every afternoon somewhere safe until the next morning. Sometimes you will have to work on your own as adults are busy. That is all part of growing up, too. Remember also that you can use your hands to pray anytime you've got a little time for God. Thinking of the 5 reasons to pray especially helps when we are worried. It's ok to be worried. Adults worry about lots of things too. Saying a quiet prayer helps me.



3. The Future

This is not the ...*end of the world*! It will pass – and look forward to that! If you have a school calendar, look at the photos and remind yourself of all the great friends you will see again. We will find lots of reasons to celebrate - and we will celebrate together. What are you looking forward to celebrating? If you are worried about catching up, I understand that. But we have lots of excellent staff in New Row who are already planning what they can do to help you when we welcome you back. And I just can't wait to be standing at the door that morning!



Until next week, take care. This will pass 

Mrs Graffin



Parent Information 30th March 2020

Dear parent/carer

What strange times we find ourselves in. I sincerely hope that you and yours are keeping well and staying safe during these worrying times. Remember to get in touch if you have any queries, concerns, feedback – or even to share your child's work (our inbox will thank you for picking just one piece of work or photo of an activity per week!). Mrs McElroy (VP) will respond to queries in the first instance and consult with teachers as necessary. Thank you all for your amazing messages of support. Our staff are excellent and are working so hard for your children.

Take care – this will pass. Until then, look after each other

Mrs Deirdre Graffin *Principal*

Here is a list of home-school truths to put things into perspective (taken from a Twitter post)

- 😊 Your child does not need to put in a 6 hour shift each day. An hour or two of learning-type activities is plenty.
- 👨👩 Every child in the world is in the same boat. We will get them all caught up.
- 👨👩👧👦 Every parent in the world is in the same boat. Stop beating yourself up.
- 👨👩👧👦 You are not their teacher. You still have a home to run and possibly your job to do from home. Prioritise!
- 🤔 If you are worrying that you are not doing enough, you probably are.
- 💻 Let them have some screen time if it preserves your sanity. There are lots of quality resources online – check the weblinks your teacher sent...We can do digital detox when this is over!
- 🎲 Find a balance that works for your family. Fancy playing a board game instead? Fine! Post a pic. Want to cook lunch together? Great! Post a pic!

- 😊 Your child can or soon will be able to complete these tasks independently so bear with them – and us!
 - 📅 For some children, there won't be enough activities in their overview – for others there will be too many. Don't stress about doing them all – there is enough to be stressing about at the minute.
 - 😡 Don't fight with them! We need all the love and positivity that we can get at the moment.
 - 📞 Just check in with us every now and then to let us know how you're getting on.
 - 😊 We love and miss your children. Ordinarily we are privileged to get to spend 5-6 hours a day with them. Cherish this extra time with them as best you can. We only have one non-negotiable: Keep them at home! In the meantime, be kind to yourself. We trained to do this for a living and we're struggling to juggle it all! We are already looking forward to being back in our classrooms with your amazing children. 😊
- Love from the entire New Row Community* 💙

Free School Meal Payments

The Department of Education have announced that they will introduce direct payments to families whose children usually benefit from free school meals. Families will receive £2.70 per child per day for each day of term the schools are closed. These payments will begin to be processed during the week of 30th March. There are a few families for whom bank details are not held. These families will be contacted via text message next week and asked to complete an online form which will be available on the EA website. It is vital that people respond to any request from the Education Authority, to avoid delay in payment.

Education City Y1-7: Well done to everyone who has logged on and played their games. If you haven't managed it yet, get in touch. This is a great way to get focussed activities. These change every week, too!

Emergency Childcare provision for key workers

When school closure was first announced just 10 days ago, Peter Weir outlined the intention to use the school estate to provide childcare. Since then, we have been working with a variety of agencies to establish readiness. As a school community, we are very sympathetic to the needs of Key Workers and the **amazing** job they are doing. However, at this time New Row PS is unable to open for childcare due to health and safety concerns. Although it is regrettable, I have been reminded of the importance of thinking of the health and safety of the entire New Row community, including those which such provision is intended to support. Should there be any future developments, I will inform all parents as appropriate.