



ST KATHARINE'S CE
SCHOOL

Friendship, Effort, Respect, & Honesty

Thursday 7th May 2020

NEWSLETTER No. 16

Our Value This Term Is... *Creativity*



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Dear Parents,

Welcome to the third of our newsletters since we closed our doors, to all but a few of you, in March. Again, I hope this finds you well and still managing to navigate what is now our new normal. I have been reading a lot in the press about the challenges that are being presented to parents by home-learning and as such would like to begin by celebrating you - our parent community - for everything that you are doing to support your children through this difficult time. You are doing a great job; we are looking forward to taking back the reigns at some point in the (hopefully not too distant) future but in the meantime give your selves a pat on the back, a round of applause or a much earned sit down with a cup of tea! Please accept this **round of applause** from us – here at St Katharine's.

Phone Calls Home

The teaching staff have been busy calling all families this week to find out how everyone is and make sure that you are able to access the materials that are being sent out. There are a few families who we haven't been able to contact or have had to leave a message on an answerphone. We will continue to try and make contact but if in the meantime you know you have missed a call and would like to speak to us please email the admin@ address and request that someone contact you. There have been a couple of numbers that haven't been recognised; if you think that you need to update your details with us please email us with that information and we will amend our records.

When will school re-open?

There is, as you will all be aware, huge amounts of speculation in the press about when, if and how schools might re-open. Most of this is hugely unhelpful as without proper details we are unable to begin planning. We do know that we are expecting there to be an announcement from central government, about how key businesses and organisations may start to open up, on Sunday evening. We continue to work very closely with our Excalibur Academy colleagues and have been very well supported throughout this period, with guidance, information and policy, by the central Excalibur team. Whilst we are all keen to enable children to return to school at the earliest possible time there is a strong consensus that this must be managed as carefully as possible with the safety of children, families and staff at the heart of any decisions that are made. Please rest assured that we will be communicating any decisions and plans with you, as soon as we have them.

Home Learning

Leaving aside the many challenges of trying to home educate your children while maintaining work and other home and family commitments, I hope that you are at least managing to navigate the weekly grids and resources on See Saw.

Please try not to let home learning overwhelm you; I realise that this is more easily said than done. You know your child and your circumstances from the inside. We are aiming to support you with materials that will enable your child to maintain reading, spelling, writing, to consolidate mathematical concepts and build proficiency in times tables. The broader curriculum grids (Y1-6) are

built around a theme (rivers, transport etc..) that can be used for you to select activities from. Please **do** feel that you can let your child develop their own interests and passions at this time. If the teachers are, for e.g., suggesting making a leaflet about rivers and your child is not motivated get them to transfer the skill and make a leaflet about something else. If leaflet making is the problem, get them to share their river knowledge in a way that suits them. Learning is certainly not confined to the areas of study that we select in school to build a curriculum around. What we hope for, more than anything, is that children develop life-long skills that they can apply to many different contexts. Research is research – it doesn't matter what you are researching... As adults trying to navigate this new world we can only do our best, I may speak from the perspective of someone who has teaching skills but I assure you that in my house, at my kitchen table they appear not to count. I attempted quadratic equations last week... I am glad that there were no witnesses! Suffice it to say, keep going and know that you are not alone.

A bit more about



Last week we set a challenge to all children and their families to try to upload something on to See Saw. We have seen a big rise in the number of you sharing what the children have been up to. I know that the teachers really treasure the connection that this brings them with the children and love to see the wide range of activities that the children have been up to. Anything that the children want to share can be shared and the teachers will add their comments and feedback. We have had a lot of parents telling us that it is really helping to motivate the children and that the children love to see the comments (and virtual gems) when they come back. I have seen wonderful art, beautifully presented stories, power point presentations, miniature rivers (with water), a whole array of delicious cakes, bike riders, treasure hunters and a lot of gardeners, to name but a small handful. Please don't let being uncertain about how to get started become a barrier. Contact your child's class teacher via admin@ and they will be glad to get you set up.

Bank Holiday Friday 8th

We are closed on Friday for the bank holiday. If you get up to anything in celebration of this 75th anniversary of VE Day, please let us know or perhaps share a photograph with us for the next newsletter. There is no work set for the children. Our expectations are that you manage some time together, hopefully in the sunshine, and enjoy yourselves!

Something to share?

We haven't exactly been inundated with things that you would like to share with us and the school community, so please have a go at sending something in for this section of the newsletter. I would however like to thank the Franklin family (Mark, Georgie, Eva-May and Leo) this week who have made this copy of the painting 'Dog in a Smoking Jacket' with the help of Otto! (please see below).

With kind regards we hope you continue to stay safe and well.

Niki Jones

Principal

What have we been up to? Celebrating our St Katharine's Purple Learners from home...

