

Building Each Other Up in Love and Learning

7th May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Firstly, I hope that you and those you care about are well. I'm writing on behalf of our governors to thank all of our parents, children and wider school community for the support you have shown during this unprecedented and challenging period, and to give you an update on recent changes and some changes we can expect over the coming weeks.

As governors, we are very aware of the hard work of the whole community as we adjust to this new way of working, with often extremely challenging home and work circumstances. At the start of the year, none of us would have expected that our teachers would have to develop, from scratch, a home learning programme for every age group and every home circumstance, which would keep children safe (while also providing a daily connection to the school) or that parents would have to find a way to support children through this while working from home! We are extremely proud that St Stephen's continues to push forward in delivering the best home learning programme possible, while also navigating the roll out and review of new technology to ensure it meets the strict safeguarding and accessibility criteria of the school.

The summer term has seen the school connecting with the children using the following methods:

- Daily registers
- Pre-planned video lessons from the teachers accompanying the online assignments
- Submission of students work each day and feedback from teachers
- Recognition of the children's work through merits, direct feedback and other mechanisms
- Interaction through Google's online teaching tools
- Video messages sent to the school
- Online newsletters

This connectivity allows us to introduce new topics of learning across core subjects and other areas of the curriculum and is key to ensuring the children are as prepared as possible for a return to school at some point in the future. In addition to the home learning programme, the school staff have been running an engaging and fun key worker school programme and providing support to vulnerable children during this challenging time. The school is also collaborating with other schools to provide holiday care for children of key workers and planning for various scenarios to be as prepared as possible on welcoming the children back to school, as and when the government issues its advice.

As we move through the lockdown period our focus, as governors, is now not only on home learning, safeguarding, the wellbeing of children and staff, but also now looking forward to what reopening school will look like. Both staff and governors are planning for a range of eventualities to ensure that the transition for the children is as smooth as possible whilst realising that, with new constraints around social distancing, the school they return to is likely to be very different in set up from the one they left.

Finally, on behalf of the board of governors, I would like to acknowledge the tremendous effort of the St Stephen's team and want to thank each and every staff member for their fantastic contribution in these very challenging times.

Best Wishes,



Alice Bishop, Chair of Governors