



St. Mark's Catholic Primary School

Headteacher Mrs. D. Linley



Week Ending 12th June 2020

Dear Parents,

I hope you are all keeping well and safe.

Last week in school we saw many changes take place in preparation for more children returning to school this week. I hope you have all had chance to familiarise yourself with some of those changes on our 'Covid-19' response page on the school website.

We welcome Mrs. Barnett (temporary school office admin assistant) and Mr. Nazir (temporary caretaker) to the St. Mark's Team during this pandemic.

Following government guidelines, some of our staff are working from home, and so the roles and duties of staff in school have changed considerably. I am, and continue to be, immensely proud of all the staff in school as they continue to work hard and adapt to the many pressures presented to us in the current climate. I take very seriously the safety of all children and staff in school and as a school we continue to adhere to the rules, regulations and advice of the Government, Local Authority, the scientific data, the teaching unions and other integral bodies such as Public Health England. It is therefore very concerning to hear reports from some children in school that not all families are adhering to the social distancing rules. Please remember that the government guidelines and rules are in place to protect ALL, and that staff and children in school should NOT be put at greater risk by those families choosing not to adhere to government guidelines.

This week the government announced that not all groups of children would be expected to return to school before the end of the Summer Term as hoped. As a school we will continue to deliver the very best care and education we can for all pupils, while we wait for the government to make an announcement on when more children will be allowed to return to school. Any changes to the current setting at St. Mark's will entail a great deal of planning and so we will endeavour to keep you updated on decisions and plans as soon as we have them. Thank you very much for your support so far, it is much appreciated!

Home School Learning

Our approach to home school learning has changed and I urge you all if you have not already done so to read the 'Home School Learning Booklet' on the 'Covid-19 Response' page. As always, we are going to review this as we strive to improve. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you require any further support.

Telephone Calls

A number of parents have informed us when we have made calls that it has been quite a while since they last heard from us. I can assure you that staff have been and will continue to make regular calls. Many of these calls are taking place from staff's homes and so you should expect to see the message 'No Caller ID' appear on your phone. We record all phone calls made and whether parents answer the call or not. We will now be making weekly phone calls so that we can monitor your home learning more closely and provide support where necessary.

ZOOM Learning Live Sessions

On Thursday 11th June, we held our first 'Welcome to Live Learning Zoom Session'. It was wonderful to see so many families attend this virtual meeting, we are looking forward to more formal Live learning sessions that are going to take place in school next week. If you haven't already, please respond to the enquiry@stmarkrc.bham.sch.uk email address to confirm that you and your child will adhere to the 'Acceptable Use' policy.

Supporting pupil mental health and wellbeing

The government website contains a great deal of useful information in relation to how parents can best support their child's mental health and emotional wellbeing. We have included some useful information below, but please read further guidance available at: www.gov.uk

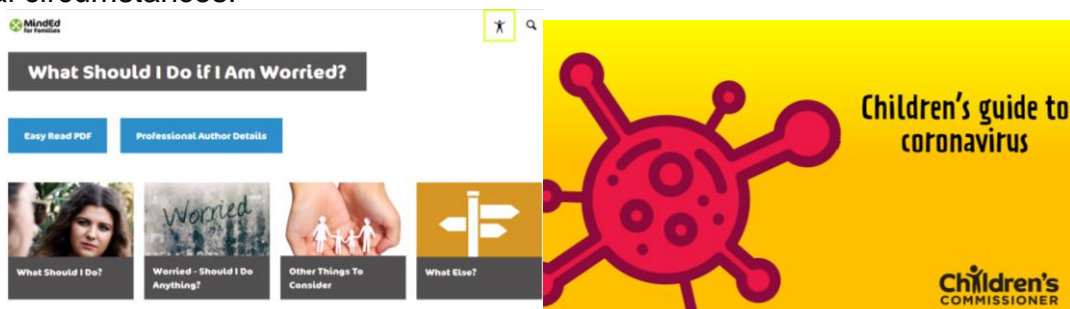
Helping children and young people cope with stress

There are some key points you can consider about how to support your child or young person, including:

Listen and acknowledge: Children and young people may respond to stress in different ways. Signs may be emotional (for example, they may be upset, distressed, anxious, angry or agitated), behavioural (for example, they may become more clingy or more withdrawn, or they may wet the bed), or physical (for example, they may experience stomach aches).

Look out for any changes in their behaviour. Children and young people may feel less anxious if they are able to express and communicate their feelings in a safe and supportive environment. Children and young people who communicate differently to their peers may rely on you to interpret their feelings. Listen to them, acknowledge their concern and give them extra love and attention if they need it.

[MindEd](http://www.minded.org.uk) (www.minded.org.uk) is a free online educational resource on children and young people's mental health for all adults, which can support parents and carers through these exceptional circumstances.



Have a great weekend and stay safe!

Mrs. Linley and the St. Mark's Team

