

SJF NEWS

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Friday 26th June 2020 (Issue 24 - 2019/20)



Update

Between now and the end of the school year I will share information in a shorter than usual weekly newsletter.

Since the first cases were reported in Wuhan, China, all areas of the world have been affected, to varying degrees, by a coronavirus that has proved devastating and deadly to so many people. Sadly the UK is one of the countries in the world most badly affected – and I emphasise the use of the present tense here – because it continues. The virus *is* still very much with us, infecting and killing so many in our country each day.

It is unsurprising though, that after weeks of lockdown - and all the restrictions linked to it - everyone is desperate for a return to 'normal' times and more familiar ways of living our lives. There is nothing more my colleagues, our Governors, and I want than to see the back of this deadly virus and a resumption of business as usual at school. We miss everyone very much and look forward to getting back to what we do best at SJF.

However it is extremely important that we do not forget the ever-present risk still posed by this virus as we start to emerge cautiously as a country, as a city and as a school community from lockdown.

It is important that we all stick to the advice, but I sympathise that it has been difficult to keep up with and so has been confusing at times: *go out, don't go out; go out to work, work from home; keep two metres apart, keep one metre plus (but not face-to-face); cover up, no need to cover up; shield, 'pause' shielding; maintain social distancing, less need to social distance; don't meet friends and family, meet friends and family; testing changes; no quarantine, quarantine, no quarantine from certain places; no unnecessary travel abroad, limited travel for holidays via air bridges etc. etc. etc.* It can all feel quite overwhelming at times...

I do urge you to be patient and to try your best to stick to the advice. Failure to do so, for example by mixing with others in ways that are not allowed or by not maintaining 2m social distancing when you can (and 1m+ when you cannot) increases the risk to you and your family of COVID-19 infection, which then increases the risk to other children and staff at school and their families, if you then bring the virus into school once infected.

When I reflect on the events of the last few weeks, the word '*unprecedented*' does not somehow seem enough. However that is literally what these times are. There is no modern precedent in the UK and so there has been no national template for us to work from. It is therefore perhaps inevitable that opinions will differ between scientists, politicians, schools, parents, carers and others about the steps taken and what is planned.

During this time schools have also been inundated with guidance which has been continuously added to, revised, updated, clarified and reissued in order to keep up-to-date with Government announcements as the UK pandemic has progressed, first to its peak and then in the weeks that have followed.

We continue to work extremely hard to interpret the instructions and guidance as they are issued and we use both to shape our decisions and responses. We have also worked hard to share updates so that everyone understands what we are doing and why, and I sincerely hope that these have been helpful to you so far.

As Headteacher I have many responsibilities, but of all them, the most important is my responsibility to keep everyone in our school community safe – and by everyone I mean the children, my colleagues, and those who visit our site. In matters of health and safety, all have equal importance and this will remain my first priority as we look forward towards the forthcoming summer holiday, September and beyond.

As a school community we will, of course, do all that is required of us in order to respond to the government's plans to open up the economy and the country more widely. In doing this we will absolutely focus on our children's wellbeing and academic development without ever losing sight of a COVID-19 threat that the Chief Medical Officer warns will be with us all in the UK well into 2021.

Summer Holiday

The Prime Minister's Office and the Secretary of State for Education have confirmed that schools in England will close over the summer holiday for all pupils including the children of key workers. Sheffield City Council is





considering how summer holiday provision can be provided safely and we will share any information forwarded to us. You can also follow the link to the council's website: <https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home>

Y6 Leavers

One of the saddest aspects of the current situation has been its impact on school life. For the children in Y6 currently, it would usually be a very special time as they prepare to leave us and get ready for secondary school. Unfortunately we will not be able to do any of the usual things that would have formed part of their usual rite of passage, but we are thinking of ways of marking this important moment in the lives of our Y6 children, and though it can never be the same we will do all we can to make it as special for them as possible.

The Headteachers of All Saints and Notre Dame Catholic High Schools have already agreed that pupils transferring from our school will be allowed to return for a day or afternoon at some future point, if they want to, in order to experience a postponed last day. Those who do return will be able to catch up with friends and staff, have their old SJF school shirts signed and take part in a simple liturgy to which their parents/carers will also be invited if possible. We will also try to arrange an official group photograph on the day. I will be speaking to the Headteachers of Birley Academy and Westfield as well to ask about releasing our pupils who will be transferring to those schools.

The plans, including the date, will be confirmed later when we have more details about how the government want schools to operate and there is clear scientific data about local infection rates that mean it is safe.

School Reports

Since becoming Headteacher I have been keen to share targets and information about pupil progress and attainment at the very beginning of the school year and then after each assessment point with the last report of the school year being more detailed and including a longer general comment from the teacher.

I feel strongly that this approach enables parents/carers to keep up-to-date with their children's progress, achievement and targets over the course of a whole school year, helping them to get involved and support their children at home. Our approach is also in line with the fundamental Catholic philosophy that parents/carers are the *first* educators and so need to be kept informed and involved at all times.

As you know lockdown occurred just after our second assessment point, and interim reports, including information on your children's progress and attainment up to Assessment Point 2 (AP2) were posted out, along with their new targets.

Obviously lockdown has limited what has been done since because formal teaching and learning has not happened. As a result we have changed the format of the reports this summer.

The children's last interim report for AP2 will be reviewed and where there is sufficient evidence that targets have been achieved (from a review of online activity and/or communication with parents/carers) new targets will be set if a teacher is satisfied, otherwise the AP2 targets will be taken forward to next year.

Accompanying the report will be a letter to the children from the teachers which will cover key points that would ordinarily appear in a general comment. I felt that this was important; an opportunity for teachers to write a personal note of thanks to their pupils and show the children what they mean to them. In exceptional circumstances, where there is a particular issue, teachers may also contact parents/carers as well.

No attendance data will be shared though, because the children's attendance data up to lockdown was shared with the AP2 interim report has not been required by the government since lockdown. The reports/letters will be shared in due course.

September 2020

Full Opening

The Secretary of State for Education has confirmed his commitment to all primary-aged children returning to school full-time from September 2020. There has been no guidance about how this will be managed, but because it will not be possible with social distancing we expect some further clarification in due course. There has been informed speculation that pupils and staff will operate in class 'bubbles' and not be allowed to mix.



This will have implications for school life, including the start and finish of the school day, break times, lunches, whole-school events like Masses, assemblies and liturgies that we will need to unpick once the government decides what it wants us to do. As soon as we know more, we will share details and arrangements with you.

Transition

The rapid lockdown of school took everyone by surprise and prevented children from saying a proper goodbye to teachers. There has also been no internal transition possible either. Conscious of this and the fact that after so many months away from school many of our children might feel a little disorientated returning straight into new classroom with new staff, I have decided that the first few days of the new school year will be spent with their previous teacher in their previous classroom. During this time they will be able to reconnect with school in familiar surroundings and spend some precious time with this year's teachers before starting full-time in their new classroom with their new teacher(s) at the beginning of the second week. This more gentle approach to the start of the year is being adopted in a number of schools because it will also give us a chance to assess the wellbeing of our children and prepare appropriate responses for any who are struggling.

Class Teachers for 2020-21

FS2	Mrs Darken
Y1	Mrs Sambrook (Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday) and Mrs Hadfield (Thursday and Friday)
Y2	Mrs Broadhead
Y3	Miss Brownbill
Y4	Mr Broadhead
Y5	Mr MacInness
Y6	Mrs Barrett (Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday) and Mrs Holloway (Wednesday Thursday and Friday)

FS2

Arrangements for the transition of our new FS2 children are in hand and families are being contacted directly. Information and videos will also be uploaded to a new area of the website from next week.

Home Learning

All home learning books have been/will be reviewed teachers and will be available for collection at the end of the current school year or beginning of next. All new home learning activities will now be made available between 3.30pm each Friday and 7.00pm each Sunday for parents/carers to review before the children start them on Monday. The latest set is for the forthcoming week and the set that follows will cover a fortnight, because it will be our 'SJF International Fortnight'.

Achievements Outside of School

Please share some of the exciting educational things that you have been doing at home that your children have enjoyed and are proud of. Perhaps you have been cooking and baking? Perhaps you have been working in the garden? Perhaps your child has learned to prepare his/her own lunch? Perhaps your child has been helping family members or those in the community? Big or small, if they are important to your child we will publish and celebrate the good news! Achievements can be emailed to enquiries@st-johnfisher.org.



Here is Drew practising his red words in flour and Finn making a lava lamp for science and sitting with his amazing solar system creation to help him learn about the planets! Well done boys!

On the next page you will see letters and poems written by some of our children, that were published in the Sheffield Star during lockdown!



LET'S TALK

In the picture



Dad Scott submitted this picture of his six-year-old daughter, Franee, Position at home with the flowers in Ecclesfield. Dad has to see your pictures - send them to read@epi-egs-thames.co.uk and they could appear here.

Missing school

I miss school so much. Maybe I am not a typical 11-year-old, as I love school. I wish I could see my friends and go to lessons. My mum tries to teach me, but she's not that good at it - she has no patience. She left school in 1988 and times have moved on since then.

I am hoping we are back at school very soon and everyone can go back to being 11 like it was before this disease came and started killing people. Stay safe everyone.
**Freddie Ersson
Age 12**

Birthday distancing

My sister is amazing. Every week, without fail, we've celebrated for the NHS and last week we sang Happy Birthday to Captain Tom Moore, as well as one of our neighbours.

Last week it was also my birthday and a lady from my street organised for people to sing to me - at a distance. It was a bit embarrassing but nice to feel a real sense of community in this time of need.

My brother and I have walked the distance to Charwell in our back garden and have raised money for Year 1 and the Cathedral Archer Project. There have been some really generous people supporting us, including my cousins who live abroad and should have been coming over to see us in a few weeks time.

The lockdown is really difficult and I miss school. I miss my friends who I'm really missing as we're like sisters, but I think it's amazing how everyone has really pulled together as a community. Lots more than we have ever done before.
**Katy Hopkins
Age 12**

Home school gets boring

I really miss my friends and my family - it just isn't the same without them. I fantasise my

grandparents and friends nearly every day, but it is not as good as seeing them. Home school is much better. It gets a little boring and I hate not being able to go to the park near my house when it's warm.

It's not great and I'm worried. We play board games every day and I am enjoying spending time with my mum and dad.

My great granddad has been near us and we have walked down to talk to him from the top of the driveway, because he isn't allowed to leave his house and he is 100 up.

I really want to go home a bit but I can't. It's nice that the NHS helps us so much. My cousin works for the NHS and knows what it is like to have lots of poorly people to look after.

I really hope it will get better soon so everyone will be able to see each other again.
**Pollyanna
Age 11**

Rabbits are having fun

I really want to see my rabbit but only when it is safe. I hate not seeing my friends at school.

The only people I know who are enjoying it, are my rabbits, Penelope and Waffle. They love running around the garden and keeping the grass short. Franee is at very feisty and will eat just about anything while Waffle is much more hesitant and cautious.

Penelope is very fluffy, just like a bear. Waffle has a mean like a lion. They both enjoy the sun, so are loving the extra time. The only bad side for them is they have less to eat because we can't go to the shops as much.

I am happy for my rabbits, but miss normal life.
**Sophie Bell
Age 11**

Good and bad to lockdown

I really miss school and my friends - school at home just isn't the same. The best parts of lockdown are spending more time with my family and pet. The worst parts of



Penelope, one of Sophie and Justice's two pet rabbits

lockdown is that I can't see my friends and cannot go out of the house apart from my daily exercise. Although, I have been playing board games, playing with my sisters and cuddling my rabbits, Penelope and Waffle.

There are also being doing at home and playing school at home, where I have been gardening and taking the rabbits for a walk. Things have been very different.

Instead of doing clubs and classes, we have been doing them virtually - and if I can't do them at home, I have to remember everything I have learned for the next time I do it.

Anonymous letters will no longer be published

Lockdown has made me feel sad and happy at the same time.
**Jessica Bell
Age 11**

Thank you to NHS heroes

staff for putting up with us for all these years and thank you to all the people who are working hard fighting the coronavirus today and in the future.

I also want to thank all the other people who are working and help feed us and all the other jobs that we still working. My mum and dad both work for the NHS and they work really hard so that we can have nice things. So thank you so much.
**Mum and Dad
Molly Pugham
Age 11, Sheffield**

A poem called Rainbows

A rainbow brightens the place. Like being in light blackness and finding light to a room of villains, a friendly face.

A rainbow is joy, is hope. Weeds in the beaver soil. Seeing stars through a telescope. Finding youth in grinning old.

Highnesses falling over people. Thank you to all the NHS

people. Thank God for all of you living now and let's pray we will continue to be alive. Keep praying, God Bless you. And I must say, thank you NHS.

Can't wait for sleepover

When lockdown is over, I can't wait to be back at school and be with my friends.

I want to have lots of fun times with them, playing all the games we played before lockdown, games like hide and seek and don't let the other person get on the grass-eg. My friend Candis is the best at it.

I would definitely like to go to my grandparents' house and say hello. I want to play basketball with my granddad, do games with my gramma, go swimming with grandpa and make cards with grandpa.

My sister, too, has promised we can have a sleepover when this is all over, and there is glow-stick party with hot chocolate.
**Isabella
Age 11**

TV shows a different time

Lockdown has been exciting, because I get a laptop so I can talk to my friends or do work, sometimes at the same time.

I've been doing a bit of dancing and playing in the garden, things like ball games, and skipping and swing ball.

We took part in an internet cooking with my friend Isha Mirza and her dad Babbar, who was on Masterchef. It was great fun and the chocolate brownies and gulabani mullai (sambhar)

The newspaper is full on a tradition of accuracy and fairness, giving you the information you need to understand our world, helping power the accurate and ongoing stories. Our translators and messengers are the only place where you can read first participants to

Staff News

At Easter we said farewell to Mrs Mappin when her contract with us came to an end. Mrs Mappin has secured a permanent full-time position at another Sheffield school and leaves with all prayers and best wishes for her new exciting role. She also leaves with our sincere thanks for the huge contribution she has made supporting children and staff since joining the team.



Statement to Live By

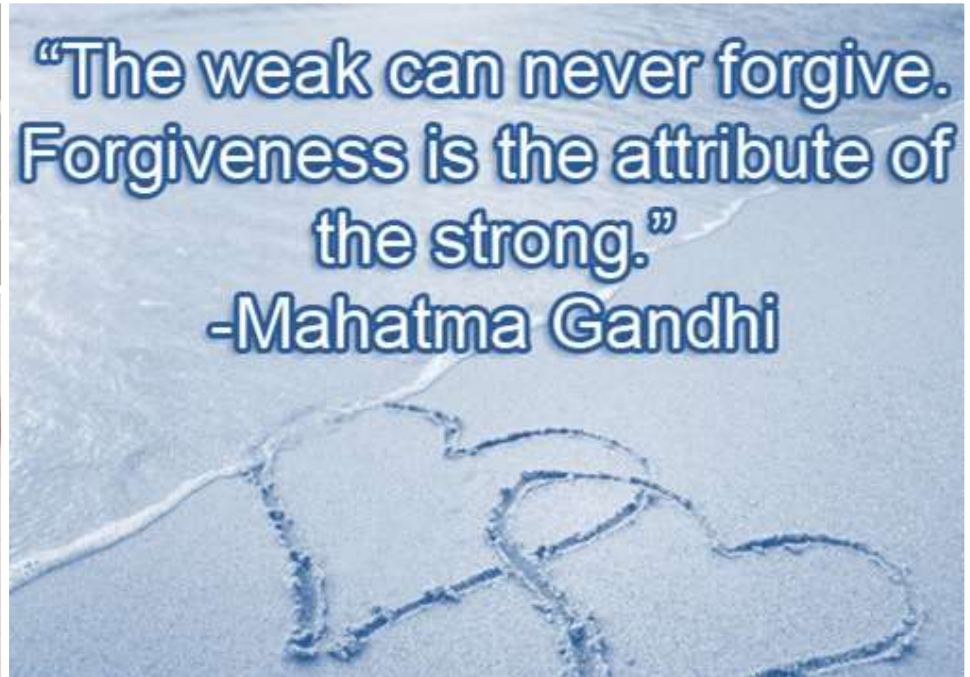
Next week our 'Statement to Live By' will be **"I try to accept the forgiveness of others"**

Time to talk: To be forgiven is a gift. Sometimes it is a gift that is difficult to accept because we feel too ashamed - too unworthy to accept fully the forgiveness of others.

God asks to accept the forgiveness of those we hurt if we are truly sorry. He died on a cross so that we can receive this gift. He therefore calls us to be unafraid; to trust in Him; and to accept the forgiveness of others.

The act of forgiveness is an act of love. God is love. By accepting forgiveness we are accepting God – and we are choosing freedom...

There is no love without forgiveness, and there is no forgiveness without love.



Best wishes,
Mr Barratt