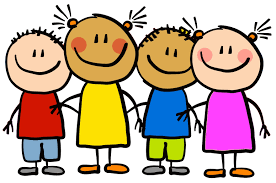
**Update on home learning 31/3/20**

I just want to connect with you all again to see how you are all getting on.

A lot has changed in the last fortnight for us all and so it is important to remember this – be kind to yourself and don’t be too hard on yourself to perform or meet too many goals. The same goes for the children. This is a tricky time for them – I’d imagine the initial delight of having 2 weeks off school has worn off a bit as they are not able to just carry on as normal, meeting and playing with friends and going to Setanta club, Irish Dancing classes or football or gymnastics. Let them have time to just be kids as they try to make sense of what is happening and process the changes to their normal lives.

 **Let them be kids**

**Routines**

* Children need routine – no matter how laid back they may seem. It is important to maintain some sense of normal for them throughout the time they are off school and can’t go to play dates etc.
* Make a timetable with them so they know what to expect each day. This can be as simple as a wake-up time each morning and a bedtime at night. This is not the same as the holidays.
* Try to keep screen time limited to the normal amount that you usually would allow. (A little extra won’t do any harm but I would try to stick to a limit where possible.)
* Have a set time each day where the child can complete any schoolwork
* Exercise is important – every day – whether it’s a run/jog, a YouTube workout or a quick cycle around the estate – try to get outside if possible.
* Chores/jobs around the house

**Music**

Children love music and it is a great way to relax. Don’t forget to practice all the songs from the beginning of the year. I will be adding some more shortly

* Listen to a piece of music – what does it remind you of? how does it make you feel?
* Teach your child a song that you learnt when you were their age
* Listen to the different instruments of the orchestra
* Listen to a variety of different pieces of music
* Dabbledoo music (free to enrol and then select senior infants)

<https://www.stmarys-belfast.ac.uk/aisaonad/Rainn/Ceol_agus_rainn.html>

Poems and songs for Spring

<https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=spreag+an+ghaeilge+le+spraoi>

Games in Irish to play outside

### **P.E./ Exercise**

* Walk, jog, run, cycle around your local area.
* Create an obstacle course in your house or back garden.
* Youtube/Go Noodle
* Create a list of movement breaks
* Seomra ranga 10@10
* Joe wicks every morning

### **Art**

* Draw scenes from the book you’re reading
* Create whatever your imagination allows from using recycled materials
* Using an old shoebox create your dream bedroom (use recycled materials or draw)
* Using an old shoebox create your magical garden.
* Watch Free video clips- lunch Doodles with Mo Willems

**Play**

**Play** is **important** to healthy brain development. It is through **play** that children at a very **early** age engage and interact in the world around them.

children develop important investigative and problem-solving skills that are needed later in Numeracy and literacy activities and indeed throughout their lives.

**Play enables young children to develop physical skills:**

* encourages children to use gross motor skills such as balancing, cycling with and without stabilisers, hopping, jumping, running, skipping, bouncing, completing obstacle courses, and playing team games with rules such as basketball, football, and hurling, or parachute game (trying to make a ball fall over the edge of a large sheet held by members of two teams)
* creates opportunities for using beanbags, balls, bats, hula hoops, racquets, skipping ropes, and large play equipment, such as slides and climbing frames

**Play** **provides experiences to use fine motor skills**

* provides experiences to use fine motor skills through activities that involve the children picking up and inserting items, for example opening and closing buttons and zips, doing jigsaws, working with beads, sewing, and building with small construction toys

**Play extends young children’s knowledge about their world:**

* helps children to collect, sort and organise objects and natural materials, for example shells, leaves, stones, seeds,flowers

**Play encourages respect for the environment and surroundings,**

* sorting and putting rubbish in the bin, making a compost heap, turning off lights and taps when they are not needed, using cardboard tubes, plastic containers, and packaging for art and construction

Don’t be afraid to join in and ask questions to develop and extend their thinking their thinking.

**Religion**

Let us continue with our little Lenten pots. We have less than 2 weeks to go. This must be the toughest Lent yet!

Try to place this pot on your table and talk to your child about the symbolism of each object for each week.

* **Fifth Sunday of Lent - A band-aid to remind us to help those who are hurt or sad. I Thessalonians 5: 13b**
* **Palm Sunday - A piece of purple felt to remind us that Jesus is our King. Colossians 1: 15-20**
* **Easter Sunday - A small stone to remind us of the empty tomb and that Jesus is with us. Matt. 28: 1-8; 18-20**

Remember your little white rosary beads! Remind your child to say a special “Sé do Bheatha a Mhuire” each night to Mary before they go to sleep. She will surely look after them.

**Independent time/space**

I think during this period it is important that children have a place to go for some independent time and space. I can imagine that it may feel a bit cramped in lots of houses with everyone working at home but having a space or a time where your child can go to just have 10-15 minutes of time on their own is important.

## Family time

Continue with your usual family routines where possible. Have breakfast/dinner together, play board games or watch TV, do a workout together.

**Finally, A word of encouragement for parents**

It’s strange to be working from home and not sure when this will all be over. Our ‘normal’ day to day routines are completely changed. It is really very easy to get caught up in all this fear but wait on the Lord. He is the one who will renew our strength.

But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint

Isaiah 40:31

Any times you are feeling overwhelmed find ways to spend time with God. Start the day off with a prayer- you don’t even need formal prayers. Ask your child to show you how they find God in their heart room and spend a little time there every day.

Your child really loved doing this. They knew that they could go into their heart room at any time, whether they were happy or sad and they would meet Jesus there.

It is so easy to become fretful and worry about how you are going to get through this home learning but just remember it is only one day at a time. Have a focus for just one day.

We don’t have to try to figure everything out. We are all in this together and it is just one day at a time.

## Overall, I hope you are all doing ok and we will be connected soon on class dojo. I will be uploading shortly our new theme and related Numeracy and Literacy work for April on class Dojo

## Instructions for Class dojo

## make sure you have sent your email address

## Download app Class Dojo on your phones or iPad, or access dojo online

## check emails to accept invitation to join Dojo class and follow the instructions.

## Take care and God bless,

## Tabhair aire agus beannacht Dé

## Múinteoir Majella

## Here is a little sun prayer from the heart room you could teach your children. (told by a child)

## You look up at the sky and you raise your hands towards the sun; then you wrap your hands around the sun, and you place it in your heart. As you put the sun into your heart, you take a deep breath. This makes an empty space for the sun and it begins to warm your heart. Next you go into your Heart Room, while you keep your hands clasped over your heart. Then you move close to Jesus. He is waiting for you there. You become very quiet, so that you can feel Jesus very close to you. Now ask Jesus to look into your heart, and he sees the beautiful sun there. Then you thank him for the sun and all the wonderful things the sun does for us. Spend a little time just enjoying it. Then you ask Jesus to heal all the sick people and talk about all your worries.

## When you are ready, raise your hands again and put the sun back into the sky. Say goodbye to Jesus. You kiss Jesus goodbye, but he is always with you- so it is not really goodbye.

## Come out of your heart room slowly. Next time you see the sun, you will remember this prayer and you will love the sun more as it shines on your face, warms the flowers and makes them open and cheers everybody. It even makes you feel warm when you pray like this.

## Our children can teach us so much.

## “Out of the mouths of babes, comes the sound of praise” (Psalm 8:2)

## (God’s Whistle Sister Josephine Walsh)