

# Newsletter

February 2021  
Issue 9



Learning and caring for each other

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As we reach the end of this half term I hope you are able to 'switch off' and enjoy some 'down time.'

School will be closed to all children until Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February (Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February is an INSET day) and there will be no new learning posted in our Google Classrooms.

**Winter COVID Grant...**Families of school-age children who are eligible for income-based Free School Meals will receive a £20 voucher per eligible child to help with the costs of food, utilities and other winter essentials. The vouchers will be sent out to coincide with the half term school holiday. As a family, you do not need to do anything to apply and you will automatically receive a voucher for any child where there is a current income-based free schools meals claim. Please be aware that all vouchers must be redeemed within 3 weeks of issue. Any unredeemed vouchers will expire after 3 weeks to allow funds to be re-invested.

When we do return on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February it will be for the children of critical workers and those who are vulnerable. Remote learning will be uploaded again for all children who are learning at home. This will continue until the Government makes a new announcement.

**Governors' Corner...**we emailed you on 1<sup>st</sup> February because we had a parent governor vacancy. The closing date for nominations was Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> February and Mrs Colette Hallworth expressed an interest in continuing in the role of Parent Governor. As there were no other nominations, there will be no election and I am pleased to announce that Mrs Hallworth has been duly elected. She has many years experience as a Governor, has an interest in SEND, health and safety, and works in a school as a SEND teaching assistant.

**Welcome to Mr Cooke...**we are looking forward to Mr Cooke joining our staff team when we return after the half term. Initially he will be working alongside Mrs Eeckelaers and he will then take over full responsibility for Orange Class when Mrs Eeckelaers starts her maternity leave on 8<sup>th</sup> March. Many of you will already know Mr Cooke as he has taught many of our classes in the past and he is already familiar with our St Mary's family school.

**Safer Internet Day 2021...**this year safer internet day has been more important than ever and your child's class remote learning will have included online safety work. Just in case you did not see the email sent earlier this week, here is the link for an interesting website that gives you detailed information about the apps your children may be accessing:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/apps-guide/>

Some other websites containing valuable information are:

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/>

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/>

Finally, thank you for encouraging your child, for motivating them and for praising them when they have worked hard to complete remote learning tasks. We know it is a huge challenge for everyone and that organisation can be difficult. The work planned should take no longer than the Government expected hours. We have deliberately not given specific times because we know each family has unique circumstances and so you are able to plan and decide when your child will access their learning. It is up to you to decide when they will have breaks, fresh air outside and exercise. Learning has also been recorded so you are able to access at a time convenient for you and so your child or you are able to replay and press stop when you need to, this would not be possible in live, timetabled lessons.

Take care and stay safe,  
Mrs Irvin and all the staff at St Mary's