

# St Mary & St John CE Primary School

Headteacher: Elizabeth Burton



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Dear Parents and Carers,

We come to the end of a full school week of remote learning in a nationwide lockdown. In other words, truly extraordinary times and not our expected start to this new term of a new year.

We have a small number of children in school, arranged in three bubbles, with a maximum of 20 children in each. They are spread around the school to keep safe and benefit from lots of learning space due to our large classrooms. We can keep staff suitably distanced too. The children have responded well in school, doing the same learning as those at home through the online platform Seesaw.

We are really delighted with the efforts made in our school community to engage with Seesaw with an impressive 96% engagement this week, up from 91% in the first week.

We have had a huge amount of positive feedback on home learning. Thank you for taking the time to give this. The staff are working heroically, in a very different way, to make sure the online learning is interesting, interactive and fun. The world of a classroom with its own dynamic, interactions, emotional temperature and cohesion cannot be replicated online. It is fair to say that the staff would much rather be in the classroom working alongside their children and I am sure most children would rather be in the classroom too. This is, however, short term, and we are building on the many lessons learned from Lockdown 1.0, back in March 2020, and more recent feedback from a survey of the Year 4 and 5 families who had year group closures before Christmas. Thank you to our governors who have collated the survey information with useful pointers. We've looked at the Gov.Uk document *What's working well in remote education*, published 11.01.21 to check our remote learning provision.

All teachers will contact their families at least twice over this half term as a check in. We have already started this and the teachers are reporting on some positive conversations in spite of the circumstances. We do understand that some days your children will be more reluctant to do home learning due to a whole range of reasons. Your energies as parents and carers will vary too due to the strange world we're living in. This is to be expected and please remember that your child's well-being is of paramount importance, especially now. There is lots of talk about falling behind and gaps in learning. We understand that this could happen but children are also capable of very fast progress too, especially when back in a school routine. We do want everyone to do home learning but some days will be more fruitful than others.

Look out for Father Phil's lovely assembly on The Baptism of Christ recorded in our St Mary and St John church. It's on the front page of our website. You can peek at the introduction to our school too and the spectacular nativity video is still there.

A quick reminder that our e mail [covid19report@ssmj.org](mailto:covid19report@ssmj.org) is in use at the weekends to report a confirmed case of any child WHO HAS BEEN IN SCHOOL (not needed for those at home).

I will write to the children next week but - in the meantime – please send them my love and tell them I am missing them lots.

Best wishes,  
Liz Burton