



St Augustine of Canterbury Catholic Primary School

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Dear Parents and Carers,

We have reached the end of our first week of school closures. I would like to begin by expressing my gratitude to all of our parents and staff for your support and understanding during this difficult time for all of us and our families.

As you know, the school remains closed; however, a very small number of children of critical workers/vulnerable children who have no other child care provision are able to access supervision.

Virtual Learning

We are in uncertain and worrying times; home education is essential at the moment for our children and does not replace teaching. **You're not expected to become teachers** and your children aren't expected to learn as they do in school. Simply providing your children with some structure at home will help them to adapt. Review this first week as an experiment, then take stock. What's working and what isn't? Ask your children, involve them too.

Take care of your own health and wellbeing. This will be new for your entire household, so give it time to settle. As parents and carers at home you are doing your best to encourage and engage your child into a new routine and trying to establish some normality at a time when nothing feels 'normal'.

I am sure you will agree that the quality of the activities on our VLE is amazing and I would like to thank our teachers who have shown their steadfast dedication to the children within their classes. Thank you for your many emails and comments of thanks and praise for the engaging activities the teachers have supplied.

It is important to remember that time together to play games, listen to music, read and enjoy each other as a family is paramount and I would not want any of our parents or carers to feel that they must follow the VLE to the letter and complete everything! Each child has a suggested home learning timetable which very importantly includes creative time, physical activity, fresh air, unwind etc.

Some tips:

- **Involve your children in setting the timetable** where possible. For older children, it's a great opportunity for them to manage their own time better and it'll give them ownership.
- **Be flexible.** If a task/activity is going well or they want more time, let it extend where possible.
- If you have more than 1 child at home, **consider combining their timetables.** For example, they might exercise and do maths together - see what works for your household.
- **Designate a working space if possible,** and at the end of the day have a clear cut-off to signal school time is over.



- **Stick the timetable up on the wall** so everyone knows what they should be doing when, and tick activities off throughout the day.
- **Distinguish between weekdays and weekends**, to separate school life and home life.

Online Safety

Online Safety is as important as ever; please look at our Online Safety resources on our website; there is still plenty of time to complete the National Online Safety free course which is also available through our website.

Nursing Team

If you feel that the school nursing team input would be a benefit for your family; the details have been Parentmailed. You may also email the office and your enquiry will be forwarded to Mrs Liggins.

Safeguarding

As always, our focus on safeguarding is of the utmost importance. If there is a need for any family to be supported, please do not hesitate to contact myself as Designated Safeguarding Lead or Mrs Burns and Mrs Liggins as Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads.

You can also phone Medway Children's Services First Response Service on 01634 334 466 or their 24-hour emergency number 03000 419 191.

If you have concerns about a child you can also phone:

- NSPCC on 0808 800 5000
- Child Line on 0800 1111
- Medway Police on 01622 690 690
- Non-emergency number 101
- Emergency number 999

We are mindful that some children may be feeling anxious or upset around COVID 19. Medway Education Safeguarding team have provided schools with a book called, 'Dave the Dog' to share with parents and carers which is attached to this Parentmail. This may be useful for you as parents and carers to read **on your own first** to judge if it is something which you think may be of benefit to your child for you to share together.

We are keeping in our prayers all of those who are affected by this global pandemic.

Please remember to allow time for quiet contemplation and reflection, we must all look out for each other's mental wellbeing as a caring community.

Yours sincerely

Mrs L Prestidge
Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead

