

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am sure you all heard the Prime Minister's speech expressing his plans for schools to reopen for Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 pupils. What he failed to mention was the Government are also expecting Nurseries to open.

All of us at St. Oswald's want to get pupils back into school as soon as **it is safe** to do so. The staff and the Governors have devoted their careers and own time to the care and education of young people – they do not want to see classrooms empty for a day longer than they need to be.

The first priority, however, has to be the safety of everyone in the school community: the children, staff, parents and carers who are dropping children off and picking them up. I am sure as parents you will agree that the safety of the pupils **MUST** be paramount in any decisions we make moving forward.

It will be incredibly difficult and in all honesty, be physically impossible to bring back the number of pupils being suggested and maintain any sense of social distancing, This is especially the case with very young pupils who have no concept of what social distancing and remaining 2 metres apart looks like. No matter what markings we put on the ground, how we space desks and whatever separation or groupings we put into place we have to be realistic, children are children and will gravitate towards each other. Unless we have a 1:1 cleaner following every child around cleaning everything they touch the second they touch it how, in all honesty, can I promise all of you that this terrible virus won't spread.

Like you, we have only seen the announcement and that at this stage and have been provided very little guidance on how this will look in school and as yet I cannot answer the questions you must have. We are waiting to receive more information from the Government and Sefton about what this means for all schools and how this will affect St. Oswald's with the space and staff we have available. I can say that a full time return to school for Nursery and Reception will not be possible, we are looking into what we can provide logistically with the safety measures needed.

In the short-term, I must remind you all nothing has changed we remain closed until further notice. I will of course provide further information in the coming days and weeks once I am in a position to do so.

In the meantime, we have ordered more home learning materials for you. Pupils in Years 1 – 6 will be receiving maths books that cover all the aspects of maths that the children would be expected to do this term. We will continue to keep the website updated and share ideas that are not necessarily academic activities but will be more fun for the whole family. I hope by now you have all managed to talk to your child's teacher and have been accessing the home learning materials we have provided for you.

We will continue to do our absolute best for the children we serve and miss being with, but please be patient and remember that none of us ever imagined we would be in a position where we were asking parents **NOT** to bring their children to school. That idea would have been unimaginable back in February. We will do our best and be honest about what we can provide with what we have available.

I will reiterate ... as soon as I know more I will let you know. School will be contacting parents to ascertain how many parents would consider sending their children back at this stage so we can gauge how many.

Enjoy using your new maths books and keep in touch and sending all the fantastic photos of what you have been doing.

Thank you.

### **Nursery Class Places for September**

Do you have a young child aged 2 who will be due to start Nursery next year? We have places available for our Nursery class for September for 15 hours and also 30 hour provision. We are still accepting applications for Nursery places in the next academic year. These can be sent to you electronically and once completed should be brought into school. We also need to see your child's birth certificate when you bring in the application.

Please make sure you apply as soon as possible to get the sessions that you want as 30 hours provision and morning slots are usually in high demand. Forms can also be downloaded at <http://www.stoswaldsnetherton.com/page/key-information/30511>

### **Uniform Orders**

The time of the year when we ask parents to start to order their uniform for September has now arrived! Even through these uncertain times, it is something that we need to start thinking about. We will be accepting orders later this year than ever before. Orders should be placed by 3.15pm on 05.06.20, and payment should be made at the time of placing your order. Thank you.

### **Children's University Challenges**

Details of the latest Children's University challenges are attached. The Photography School Activity is courtesy of Open Eye Gallery, a photography gallery in Liverpool.

Students can receive a credit for completing each challenge and sending their evidence to [laura.ashcroft@elevate-ebp.co.uk](mailto:laura.ashcroft@elevate-ebp.co.uk)

### **National Book Token Design Competition**

National book tokens have launched a competition with prizes of up to £350/€350 will be allocated as personalised National Book Tokens gift cards in up to 35 x £10/€10 denominations, one for each child in class. Each personalised National Book Tokens gift card will feature the winning child's design. Only one personalised design will be awarded per winning school."

How to enter:

All entries should be produced on A4 paper using the template. Complete the entry form below to see where to email your scanned template. (If you do not have access to a printer and/or scanner, you can take a photo of the artwork and use **this editable form** instead).

The competition is open from Wednesday 6th May and the **closing date for entries is Sunday 28th June 2020.**

We'll pick one winner each week until the competition closes. The winners will be featured on [nationalbooktokens.com](http://nationalbooktokens.com) and our social media channels, and their designs will be printed onto gift cards for each of their classmates when schools reopen.

There is also a chance for the school to win £5000.

### **Food Bank**

If you know of anyone in need of food bank support St. Oswald's Church is open on Thursdays: 11.00am until 2.00pm. Rev'd Debbie Statter has food vouchers that she can issue so please do get in touch with her. The phone number and contact details are on their website.

### **Christian Values**

We would like to reflect on the value of endurance as I'm sure that is exactly how we have all felt through this pandemic – that we must endure. Although the word refers to humans standing firm in the face of hardship, persecution or scorn, it is important to note the constant assurance in the Bible that God's love, mercy, faithfulness and righteousness endure forever (e.g. Psalm 118, 136).

Emphasis upon endurance is common in the New Testament where it is linked with patience and suffering. St Paul is certain that endurance is honed by suffering, is character building and is characterised by love (Romans 5:3-4; I Corinthians 4:12 – 13). It is linked with self-control, godliness (2 Peter 1:6) and steadfastness.

At it's root, endurance is recognition that life is sometimes difficult and painful, and that it is important not to give up in the face of adversity.



This is our school  
Let peace dwell here  
Let peace begin with me  
Let the room be full of contentment  
Let love abide here  
Love of one another  
Love of humankind  
Love of life itself  
And love of God  
Let us remember  
That as many hands build a house  
So Many hearts make a school.  
Amen



Take care everyone, stay safe and hopefully we will see you all soon. Keep in touch.

Yours sincerely,

Miss E. Murtagh  
Headteacher