

07/01/2021

Dear Parents

We had a great response to our Covid 19 Home Learning Evaluation in June 2020 and thanks to everyone who sent back a response. A very strong acknowledgement of, and appreciation for, the staff and their hard work supporting the children were very clear themes across every year group.

However, I did ask what we could do differently if we were ever in lockdown again, to make life easier for you at home. The main suggestion that ran through the responses and across year groups were the difficulties and costs associated with printing work. A small number mentioned the time that work was published on Dojo/Google Classroom and wanting to see and/or hear the class teacher.

Therefore, as long as government regulations allow, we are going to provide two week printed home learning packs for all year groups, which will be available for collection on Fridays. This will enable parents to get organised in good time for the week ahead and/or to do some work over the weekend and have time off during the week instead. Teachers will also be in touch through ClassDojo and/or Google Classroom.

Teachers will also be sharing video/audio clips and Explain Everything tutorials to support the learning and to enable the children to feel close to their teacher. Teachers of the oldest children in school are going to trial short ‘live’ class sessions and we look forward to seeing how the children manage this and how the technology and connectivity holds up.

Once again I want to commend the very hardworking staff of St Therese who will do their very best to support our pupils during this lockdown and appeal for your patience and understanding with the inevitable challenges and frustrations that working remotely brings.

During the last lockdown we lent devices, textbooks, exercise books, craft materials, stationery etc to families that requested them. We had regular weekly phone calls with some pupils and others had home visits. We were able to access small grants for families in need as well as make onward referrals to local organisations. Our school counsellor, Lynne Dornan, supported a number pupils and their parents via telephone/video call. Please contact us if you need any support via ClassDojo or by emailing [info@stthereseoflisieux.belfast.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@stthereseoflisieux.belfast.ni.sch.uk). We will do our very best to offer constructive support or signpost to local organisations/charities that can help.

**The two week learning packs are available for collection today (Thur) from 2-4.30pm and tomorrow (Fri) from 9.30am- 4pm.** When collecting, please wear a mask, call to the main front door and **wait outside**. A member of staff will bring the pack to you. If there is a queue, please respect social distancing. If you would like a pack but can’t collect it, please let us know and we will try to drop it off over the weekend.

We all hope and pray that pupils will return to school for face-to-face teaching as soon as possible, but we will continue to follow all the guidance from PHA and the Department of Education. I urge you all to redouble your efforts in following PHA advice, and in particular, to minimise your contacts to prevent transmission of the virus. Hopefully, with the roll-out of the vaccination programme, we will see a significant improvement in public health and can return to some normality as soon as possible.

Best wishes for 2021.

Yours sincerely

Mrs S McTaggart

Principal