

Dear Parents,

This is a very worrying and concerning time for us all and it has also been a time of great uncertainty. I would like to thank you for your patience, support and understanding over the past few days. I know that you are aware that schools were forced into a very difficult situation. A situation beyond our control.

The NI Education Minister on the 18th March issued a statement saying that schools would be closed to pupils with immediate effect. Our staff were in school from the 18th to the 20th March planning a programme of work and preparing a pack of resources and also uploading learning resources to our various online platforms- My School, NewsDesk, Fronter, SeeSaw and Education City for example.

**You will receive a pack. Staff will send you details every Friday on which pages to do. Do not let your child do pages unless instructed to do so by your teacher**.

Staff will contact you and you may also contact your child’s teacher through the **SeeSaw** programme. Many of you have already been communicating using this. If you have not been using this, you will see a QR code and instructions in this pack. It is essential that you are logged on as this will be the only way of contacting the class teacher and will be one of the main ways you will receive information and access the online learning resources for your child. You can get more information on using seesaw on https://web.seesaw.me/parents

Children in P3-P7 will also have a C2k password. This will enable them to access the online work and power point presentations uploaded by staff weekly to **Fronter. This password will be in your pack.** To access My School click [here](https://www.c2kschools.net)

P1-P4- you will have a copy of your child’s **Bug Club account** which will enable your child to continue reading whilst they are off school. Staff will check this regularly and assign your child books as required. A copy of the login and password is in your pack.

To help facilitate children's reading you can download/borrow books from the Northern Ireland Library straight to their ipads etc.  The app used is called **Overdrive** and you need a membership number and a pin number.  Parents can become virtual members of the library, which can be done online (this application process seems to be easier on a PC/laptop) and this will allow you to borrow books which stay on the device for a number of weeks before disappearing when the loan period is finished. Many of the books available are quizzable eg. Harry Potter etc. and may allow children to continue where they left off in school.

World Books have also made available 3000 on line books. You need to register into their website

You will also be given the Parent login in and password to the fantastic resource **Education City** which is an excellent site.

**We have also included in your pack a list of useful websites. These will be updated regularly on our school website**

Every Friday staff will upload a programme of work on SeeSaw for your child to complete the following week. If you need to contact the class teacher about any aspect of this work you should contact them via SeeSaw and they will reply to your query.

We understand that these are difficult times. You will be at home possibly managing the learning of several children of various ages. We understand the difficulties and challenges you will experience juggling the role of parent, carer for possibly other family members, as well as possibly working from home within your own employment sector. We have provided these resources to assist you and your child. We would not anticipate this work taking more than one and half hours maximum per day. It is so important to read and count with your child, play fun learning games and activities, use board games, lego, use imaginative play, take part in practical creative activities such as art and craft activities, cookery, exercise, use some of the fun interactive learning websites we have provided for you. Talk to your child about the Coronavirus using the suggestions on the internet. This will take away some of the fear associated with this. The work and suggestions above will also occupy your child

We would ask you to limit the amount of time your child is on an ipad, games console etc as research has shown prolonged periods on these electronic devices can have an adverse effect on your child’s concentration and behaviour.

I am also conscious that this will be a very worrying time and you or your child may need emotional support, help or advice. If you have queries regarding work please contact the class teacher using seesaw but if you need support, advice, emotional support, referral to the school counselling service etc you can e mail me on the email address attached in your pack and I will try to provide assistance.

Also, if your child is in P6 or P7 or if you need advice you can contact Relate Counselling Service on 02890323454.

I would like to take this opportunity to commend all of my staff for their hard work in these trying times. The health, safety and welfare of the pupils has always been at the forefront of their minds.

This new concept of home learning using various learning platforms is new to us all and I am aware that there may be some initial hitches. I am sure with patience; we will overcome these obstacles. Hopefully the lessons and learning provided will continue to enrich your child’s mind, stimulate their curiosity in learning, help them to follow the curriculum and help pass the time in this prolonged absence from school.

I sincerely hope that you, your family, our staff and their family and the whole community stay safe during this time of grave uncertainty and anxiety.

Look after yourself and your wonderful children. I firmly believe that we will come out the other end stronger and more united. It is going to be a difficult time ahead. Stay strong and if I can support you in anyway please do not hesitate to contact me.

I look forward to when we are all back together in school again.

Thank you

**Mrs F Boyd**

We will continue to provide updates and information on our website.

Please also follow us on Twitter **@holytrinitybelf**