

SIR JOHN CASS'S FOUNDATION PRIMARY SCHOOL

Friday 15th May 2020

A voluntary aided Church of England primary school in the heart of the City of London



Dear parents and carers,

I hope you are all well and continuing to stay safe. This week has been one of announcements and uncertainty. Some of you will be increasingly anxious about the changes that have been made, others of you will have welcomed them. It is important, now more than ever, that we respect each other and each others' views and remember that we are all in slightly different situations and what works for one person will most likely not work for another.

Earlier this week I sent you a letter saying that following the Prime Minister's announcement, I was looking at the options for starting to re-open school. Over the last few days I have met with the chairs of our governing body committees, staff in school and the local authority. I have made considerable progress with the plans, however a publication released by the DfE last night has raised further questions so please forgive me for not sending out the return to school plan today. I will continue to keep you informed as I receive information. The DfE has written a document for parents and carers on their plans for opening up schools and it can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june> I hope you find it a useful read, but do check back regularly as these documents do get updated and change from time to time.

There are some things that we do know for definite however:

Government has said that it **might** ask us to open up schools to more children as of 1st June. This is not a definite! We have been told that we will find out definitively on 30th May (48 hours notice). The situation is the same for childcare (our babies and toddlers).

If we do open up we have been asked to start off by taking the babies, toddlers, Nursery class, Reception class, Year 1 and Year 6.

If things then go according to the government's current plan, we would anticipate the rest of the year groups (Y2, 3, 4 and 5) being allowed to attend from the 22nd June (4 weeks before the end of summer term).

We have been told that we are expected to take smaller groups of children (15 in a group) when we re-open. This, as I'm sure you can imagine, has an enormous implication for staffing and time-tabling.

We will not be able to offer breakfast club, playcentre or any clubs - as this would involve groups of children mixing and therefore increasing the risk of spreading the virus.

I would like to make it clear that while the government is urging parents and carers to send their children back to school, that the decision is absolutely yours. I will not be chasing you for attendance and will not be issuing any fines for non-attendance before the summer holidays. The situation for childcare (our 0 to 3 year olds) is slightly different and following the release of further government guidance that has been promised in the next couple of days, I will send out a separate letter.

I am sorry that I can't offer you any further information at this time, but I don't want to give you information that I then need to withdraw.

I will be in touch again soon. In the meantime, why don't you read on to see what is going on next week!

Kind regards,



Miss Allan



Next week will be Science Week at SJC!

We are holding a virtual science fair for you and your family to take part in!

A science fair is a competition that pupils can enter by performing a scientific demonstration or an experiment.

A *SCIENCE DEMONSTRATION* is a quick little science "show" that explains a science concept like building a model volcano and watching it erupt. It shows how something works.

A *SCIENCE EXPERIMENT* is usually more involved and in most real experiments you compare results. An example would be "What fertilizer works best on plants?" or "What is the strongest brand of paper towel?" In these examples, you ask a question and then perform experiments to get the answer.

To have a chance at winning, you must try and explain what is happening and why. Entries will be judged by your class teacher and one winner and one runner-up will be selected from each class after the half term holiday. Don't worry if you are not sure exactly what is happening in your experiments. The most important thing is to try and **THINK LIKE A SCIENTIST and HAVE FUN!**

Your teacher will let you know how you can submit your entries but some possibilities include making a video, making a google slides presentation, or drawing pictures and writing about them.

Here are some good sites to check out if you want to find a simple demonstration or experiment you can try at home:

Science Bob: <https://sciencebob.com/category/experiments/>

Good Housekeeping: <https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/life/parenting/g32176446/science-experiments-for-kids/>



Mental health is a particularly important topic to be thinking about and aware of during difficult times like now. Mental health is like physical health and we all have it – good or bad, good days and bad days. Next week is national Mental Health Awareness week and the theme is Kindness in our Communities. One of the home learning activities that your child’s classteacher has set will be based around this theme. We look forward to seeing what children share with us.

If you have a particular interest in this topic then you might wish to visit the designated website: <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/campaigns/mental-health-awareness-week>

Music

Some of you might be missing your weekly music lessons while we aren’t in school. If you are, why don’t you have a go at one of the lessons below? You might even see some familiar faces!



- Early Years children might want to carry on with the singing with Selina: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SOheHn8ZRz8&list=PLy5eTXrBmFRUcu8vGpWAwwXmh7Ulgr8wH>
- Key stage 1 children might want to participate in lessons on rhythm and percussion: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NVVmM2Aqjt0&list=PLy5eTXrBmFRWCbj5XeGLvmUIWg7kpJ4i3>
- Key Stage 2 music lesson: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T6fcKWxfpiA&list=PLy5eTXrBmFRX2ow9hD1NW_6Xz4M2pekjU
- Violin and Cello lesson for Year 5 and 6: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fojvHH8MuvM&list=PLy5eTXrBmFRWWI-CqT8J7svGy3b8FDxsZ>

Makaton Sign of the Week

I don’t know if you noticed, but I forgot to use the sign of the week in our assembly on Monday - oops! This week’s sign is to listen. You cup your hand around your ear to make this sign.

Zoom drop ins

We won’t be continuing our drop in sessions next week as there was very little uptake in the offer. Please do remember though that you can call the school or email your child’s teacher if you would like any advice and support.

Sign	Symbol
	
To Listen	