11th of January, 2021.

Dear families,

With the news that schools are going to be closed for another while, we are anxious that we need to continue with teaching and learning in St. James’s Primary School. We also want to keep the connection between home and school. This pack aims to let you know how we will be interacting with you and your child(ren) for the coming weeks.

Seesaw

Seesaw is the app that we will use for school work. Your children will be familiar with it. Each day your child’s teacher will assign 3 tasks for your child. There will be descriptions and tutorials included to make the learning as independent as possible for your child. Your child’s login details were sent out earlier in the school year. If you have misplaced the password, please contact the school by emailing: info@saintjamessps.com

When your child is doing their Seesaw activities, it is important that they take their time and only respond to the activity in the way that the teacher has asked.

Zoom

Your child’s teacher may organise Zoom video calls with the class or groups within the class. These will be pre-arranged and the teacher will email you with the arrangements. The purpose of these calls is to check in with the pupils and to create the social links which are very important to children. Before Zoom calls take place, please ensure you have read the following guidelines.

1. Set up the device in a quiet space with no distractions or family members in the background.

2. Join the class with your microphone muted.

3. Raise your hand before speaking, just like you would do in class.

4. Kind words to be spoken at all times.

5. Speak in your normal speaking voice. No shouting.

6. Listen to and respect others when they are speaking.

How do I contact the class teacher?

As we will not be in the school building, you can contact the class teacher on their school email addresses below. Please be patient with regards to responses. Our teaching staff will be working during normal school hours, but this may change due to the family commitments of teachers and staff also. The class teacher may also contact you through email or by phone.

When will the children’s work be available?

The work will be posted from 9.30am onwards. There is no time limit on the lessons to allow the family flexibility, particularly where parents may be working from home and where there are multiple pupils in one household. We hope that the children would be able to engage in some way each day.

How could I organise the day for my child?

The best thing you can do is set up a routine from the beginning and stick to it. A normal school day sticks to routines and the children would adapt to a set routine. Involve them in deciding the timetable for the day. Below is a sample of a routine:

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| --- | --- |
| 9am | Exercise: Before any home learning gets done, it's a good idea to get in some exercise either inside or within the close range of your home. |
| 9.30 | Some school work: Children can start some of the work left for them on Seesaw. It’s best to start with maths, English or Irish. |
| 10.30 | Break Time: It's important to take a break. Make sure to have a snack and to try and get outside for some fresh air. |
| 10.45 | Some school work: Children could swap the device and the other can start some of the work left for them on Seesaw. It’s best to start with maths, English or Irish. |
| 11.30 | Watch something educational on TV or arts and crafts or read a book |
| 12.30 | Lunch Time: It's important to eat their lunch. They should try and get outside if they can too. |
| 1.15 | Finish off the work on Seesaw: Get the remaining work finished and check over the work to make sure you have gotten everything done. |
| 2.30 | Relax for the evening or log onto some of the suggested websites the school sent out. |

I don’t have enough devices for all of my children!

Please don’t worry. The children can login at different times during the day so maybe they could share the device around. Older children can even get involved with helping their younger siblings. If you are having issues with devices, please contact us as soon as possible.

Will the school office be open?

The school office will not be operating with normal times for the next few weeks. The best mode of communication is through the school email address info@saintjamessps.com

Any other questions?

If you have any other questions or have any personal circumstances that we may need to know about, please contact us. Similarly, if you are in need of materials (pencil, pen, paper etc.) or are having any other difficulties, please get in contact. We want all children to access education during this time. You can contact me through the school email address at [info@saintjamessps.com](mailto:info@saintjamessps.com) you can also contact Ms Dodrill our Home School Community Liaison at [hscl@saintjamessps.com](mailto:hscl@saintjamessps.com)

We all have our own personal circumstances which can impact on our wellbeing during this time. First and foremost, look after yourself and your families. The same message has been relayed to the staff. This is going to be a difficult time for everyone, involving long days, early mornings and late nights. The best thing we can do is keep the lines of communication open as much as possible and set expectations for ourselves which are achievable and realistic. All we can all do is try our best and give it our best shot.

Best wishes and take care

Mr Cronin

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| Junior Infants | [juniorinfants@saintjamessps.com](mailto:juniorinfants@saintjamessps.com) |
| Senior Infants | [seniorinfants@saintjamessps.com](mailto:seniorinfants@saintjamessps.com) |
| 1st Class | [1stclass@saintjamessps.com](mailto:1stclass@saintjamessps.com) |
| 2nd Class | [2ndclass@saintjamessps.com](mailto:2ndclass@saintjamessps.com) |
| 3rd Class | [3rdclass@saintjamessps.com](mailto:3rdclass@saintjamessps.com) |
| 4th Class | [4thclass@saintjamessps.com](mailto:4thclass@saintjamessps.com) |
| 5th Class | [5thclass@saintjamessps.com](mailto:5thclass@saintjamessps.com) |
| 6th Class | [6thclass@saintjamessps.com](mailto:6thclass@saintjamessps.com) |
| Ms Murrin’s Class | [msmurrinsclass@saintjamessps.com](mailto:msmurrinsclass@saintjamessps.com) |

Further Suggested Activities

\*Marks activities that could be done independently by your child.

**English**

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| **Reading** | * Read to your child often and discuss the pictures/text * \*Engage with audio books for your child to listen to * \*Encourage your child to read, read, read! * **Challenge: Finish as many books as you can over the few weeks.** * Set up a book club with their friends virtually * Sing nursery rhymes * \*Summarise the book/story, predict an alternative ending to a book.   READ, READ, READ!!  Remember to get your child to read to themselves, read to another person or be read to. ***Anytime of the day! – Any book they have at home.***  There are loads of sites out there with online books. Some include:  Animated books and/or read out loud: https://bookflix.digital.scholastic.com/home?authCtx=U.794217314  Reading books for all levels: https://rivet.area120.com/read/#/libraryScreen  Listen to books read aloud: https://stories.audible.com/start-listen |
| **Writing** | * Build up the muscles in your child’s hand by using scissors, helping with jobs around the home, playing with play-doh * \*Encourage your child to keep a daily diary for handwriting * \*Encourage your child to create books of their own * \*Allow your child to write letter, notes, emails to their friends * Encourage your child to do the shopping lists * Writing recipes * \*Writing letters to friends/family/making penpals * \*Creative Narrative story |
| Helpful online resources  https://bookcreator.com/2020/03/support-for-schools-affected-by-coronavirus/  https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home  https://www.vooks.com/ (animated story books)  https://www.storynory.com/ Great website for audio story | |

**Maths**

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| --- | --- |
| **Number** | * Allow your child to count objects * Encourage your child to help adding the shopping bill * \*Encourage your child to engage with online maths games rather than other computer games * \*Sudoku puzzles in newspapers |
| **Shapes** | * Go on a shape hunt * Look at items around the home to identify shapes in the environment and examine the properties |
| **Money** | * Encourage your child to use money and calculate change |
| **Measures** | * Are you doing some DIY? Allow your child to get involved with measuring * Do some baking and allow your child to measure the ingredients * Track your height * Walk as many steps as you can (Keep track) |
| **Time** | * Learn to tell the time * Use a calendar to mark off the days until school starts |

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| Helpful online resources  https://nrich.maths.org/  https://pages.sumdog.com/  https://login.mathletics.com/  www.topmarks.co.uk |

**Irish**

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| **Speaking and listening** | * \*Encourage your child to watch cartoons on TG4 rather than other channels |

**Other activities that your child could engage with:**

- Wellbeing booklet

- \*Artwork

- \*Creating video tutorials

- Photography

- Learn how to make your own lunch/bed

- Complete a project on an interesting topic

- **Life Skills: Allow your child the opportunity to do chores, make food, dress beds etc. Develop their independence skills.**