

# St. Mary's Primary School Cabragh

10 Whites Road, Cabragh, Dungannon, Co. Tyrone, BT70 3AN

Telephone: (028) 8776 7356

Acting Principal: Mrs Louise Quinn



1<sup>st</sup> February 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I hope you and your families are keeping safe and well in these worrying times.

The Department of Education has announced that schools will be closed for face to face teaching until at least Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March. The current high rates of infection and hospitalisation means that this continues to be necessary in the short term.

I would like to thank you all (both parents and pupils) for your fantastic engagement in Remote Learning. We know how difficult it is to juggle the demands of work and home schooling. It has also been fantastic to see the children engaging so well in the Feel Good Friday Health and Wellbeing challenges and to receive all the fabulous videos and photographs. Maintaining our sense of community and connection with the children is so important to us all in St. Mary's.

I would also like to pay tribute to all the staff in St. Mary's and thank them for their hard work and dedication. They have embraced new technology and are providing innovative, creative and high quality teaching and learning experiences for all the children via Google Classroom. The use of this platform in St. Mary's has provided opportunities to motivate the children, work collaboratively, give immediate feedback, keep the children engaged and enhance their learning experiences. We have been heartened by the positive feedback many of you have sent to us. Thank you everyone.

## Remote Learning

Alongside Google Classroom, we also encourage the children to continue to work hard at developing their reading and comprehension skills. As you know the school has invested in the Big Cat e-Library reading scheme. Class teachers will set two guided reading books at the pupil's level for the week, P1-P5. Some Key Stage 2 classes are completing class novels at the minute as guided reading. It is important that the children also continue to engage with AR. Accelerated Reader pupils in P4-P7 have now completed their STAR reading test remotely and have received their new ZPD range for reading. Teachers have set new individual targets and these have been shared with the children. Term 2 ends on Friday 2nd April. Pupils need to reach their individual targets in order to receive their prize at Easter! Pupils in St. Mary's also have the opportunity to access the MyOn website to read non-fiction books. This site is linked to the AR site so pupils can take quizzes on books they have read. St Mary's has also invested in the online spelling programme called Wordshark. All pupils should have their usernames and passwords for this site. Please contact your class teacher should you need them. All links to the online platforms are available on the homepage of the school website.

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## 1<sup>st</sup> February- St. Brigid's Day

Today is St. Brigid's Day. We are delighted with the number of families and children who took part in this week's challenge! Thank you for the wonderful photographs of the children enjoying being outdoors and gathering the rushes! We were so sad this year that we couldn't welcome our parents and grandparents into school to make St Brigid crosses. We are delighted that so many families continued this important tradition at home. The children made some beautiful crosses. Well done to all! Please see the school website for a feature showcasing all the wonderful work! A reminder that Fr Hannigan will celebrate mass at 7.30pm this evening and bless the crosses.

## Children's Mental Health Week

Children's Mental Health Week is taking place this week 1-7 February 2021. The theme of this year's Children's Mental Health Week is **Express Yourself**. Expressing yourself is about finding ways to share feelings, thoughts, or ideas, through creativity. It is about finding a way to show who you are, and how you see the world, that can help you feel good about yourself.

As parents and carers, you play an important role in your child's mental health. Click on the link below to access a range of free resources.

<https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/parents-and-carers/>

This Week St. Mary's will take part in Children's Mental Health Week. We will be encouraging the children to explore the different ways we can **express ourselves**, and the creative ways that we can share our feelings, our thoughts and our ideas.

These are challenging times for all of us. Please see advice and support links for dealing with difficult situations at home during Covid-19, how to support your child's wellbeing and looking after yourselves as parents and carers on the School Website / Parent Area/ Wellbeing.

## Mid Term Break

School will be closed for the mid-term break 15<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> February inclusive. We would encourage everyone to take a break from home learning during this time. There will be no supervised learning or online Google Classroom activities throughout this week. School will be closed and there will be no Key Worker or Vulnerable Child supervision.

Once again we would like to thank you all for your support during these challenging times. We look forward to the doors of St. Mary's opening again and to welcoming everyone back into our school community.

Take care everyone!

Kind Regards,

Louise Quinn