

# St Laurence Church Infant School

Bunbury Road  
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Birmingham  
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28th January 2021

Dear families,

You may have heard yesterday's announcement that it is not yet safe to re-open schools fully from 22nd February and that instead there is a new plan to commence re-opening from 8th March. I'm sure you will be missing school as much as we are missing you and this news may not have been welcome.

This new lockdown has seemed a lot harder than the first - maybe because we don't have the lovely warm weather to encourage us out of the house; maybe because we've done it all before; I know that for many families you are feeling the added pressure this time around from the remote learning we are sending out.

As a mummy of two girls learning at home, I know that little sinking feeling when I see another email from their school, wondering if it is going to contain another thing that I have to decide whether we can fit it into the day or feel guilty for not achieving.

I wanted to write to you to let you know that I don't want any of you to feel that sinking feeling on our account - there are enough things trying to sink us at the moment as it is! I know that every one of you will be doing the very best for your child that you can do, in whatever unique circumstances your family is in.

You are not alone in finding this hard - we are all finding this hard and that is because teaching is a full time job, being a parent or carer 24/7 is a full time job, and

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caring for younger children or older relatives, earning a living and even just keeping your home somewhat clean and tidy when there is a messy infant child there all the time are all also full time jobs - sometimes there isn't time in the day for them all.

Schools have been directed by the government to set a minimum of 3 hours of remote learning each day for Key Stage One children. This does not mean that we think this is always achievable. Our children are at an age where they need lots of support to access their learning, but the adult is often trying to juggle other things too.

Some of your children will be thrilled by logging in each day and feel rightly proud of themselves for completing all the tasks set and uploading their work, and that is so wonderful.

But I know that some of your children will not want to engage with work, will not be able to concentrate online in the same way they could in class, and will feel that school is school and home is different. Some of our children are finding all of this really hard.

I know as parents, sometimes we can't help but compare what we are doing to other families, and comparing what our own child is doing to their peers. I also know that know your child is loved, they are healthy, and safe. These are the only things that really matter right now, in the middle of a global pandemic.

As a parent or carer, you need to keep yourself mentally and physically healthy in order to care for your child - and if this means doing no schoolwork today, or tomorrow; if it means lots of screen time for your child so you can do some of the other 100 things you need to do, or another dinner out of the freezer, wearing pyjamas all day, or whatever else it takes - you have my permission. I know you are doing the best for your child and your family.

As a school we will catch up whatever we need to when things are back to normal— what will help your child most of all to be ready for that is staying happy and healthy right now.

Jesus said that if we can't change something by worrying about it, then we shouldn't bother worrying (Luke 12: 25-26) and that is the mind-set I think we all need right now.

So please, please feel incredibly proud of yourselves and of your child for the resilience and grit you are showing just getting through each monotonous day, and if you start to feel that things are getting on top of you, you know where we are - just get in touch!

With my prayers and love to you all,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Catherine Smith". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letter 'C' being particularly large and decorative.

Mrs Catherine Smith  
Headteacher

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