



St Joseph's RC Primary School

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Head Teacher
Mrs Sinead Lindsay

Respect Honesty Forgiveness Equality

Dear Parents

As we reach the end of our second full week back to school, I would like to give an insight to where we are more generally and how we are moving forward.

It has been a most unusual return, an unprecedented experience and I think you will sense the difference yourselves. However, your children appear very ready to work and settle into the school routine, which is great. They are eager to write, talk to each other and get used to each other's space again. We are grateful that they have come to school so well prepared for the changes that are all about them.

It is with regret that you cannot come closer to us to have the conversations and meetings that you normally would have, but again, we are grateful that you are able to adhere to those restrictions. We don't know when we will be able to lift them, but we will continue to be guided by local and national directives in that regard.

You may remember that prior to the end of the school term in July, we prepared a recovery school improvement plan with a focus on relationships, community, curriculum, metacognition and space. Each aspect was detailed in a way that ensured we would be able to carry out the improvements regardless of the return picture. Those groups still exist with many of the aspects already moving forward and I will prepare a summary of those to be with you by the end of next week.

On our return it quickly became very apparent that the human element is the one that we need to pay most attention to. The wellbeing of our children, their families and the whole school staff is the most important focus within the building just now. We are concentrating on those routines that give security to our learners; concentrating on ensuring that all staff know the many different protocols that they have to learn to ensure their own safety and that of others, and we are also ensuring that staff have time to look after their own families. In the absence of the security that we would normally have, we are relying on our families and our faith to continue to bring us strength and hope that you can too.

As part of the Relationships section of our improvement plan, we have engaged the services of Teachmindset, an organisation that will support the whole school community – parents, children and staff in resilience and positive mindset as well as with our approaches to Learning and Teaching across the whole school year. All of this work will be done virtually for the moment and I would like to invite you to the parent session on Wednesday 9th September at 7pm. We are delighted to be running the session with Dr John Paul Fitzpatrick who is working closely with us. The meeting invite link will be sent on Monday.

John Paul will explore with us how to build resilience and will talk about strategies for dealing with the challenging times we find ourselves in. He will also talk about the programme of work we are embarking on in school.

We met with our school chaplain and Fr. Keith on Wednesday to plan for sacramental preparation for this school year. Dates for this will be advised to you this coming week once we have devised the clear messages about how it will work. We look forward to having Fr. Raf with us through the school year as he will be able to support us in our spiritual strength to have a positive mindset. We will also miss Fr. Emmet who will now serve the University of Aberdeen and Westhill.

Lastly, I know some of you have asked about how communication is going to change this year with the absence of Class Dojo and the use of Seesaw. The Communication group have been working on that and as with the other areas of this improvement plan, we will share all of that with you by the end of next week.

I look forward to seeing you on 9th September, at the webinar described above, and wish you a happy and relaxed weekend.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Suéend Lindsay". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S'.

Head Teacher