

Dear Parents/Families,

As we ready ourselves to 'check-out' from online learning for the Easter break, I have asked our teachers to step back from their work too.

What you can't see is the work that they're doing in the background in supporting our Hub through volunteering, finding, creating and sharing tasks for home activities and most of all, worrying about all of their pupils and families.

I've asked teachers not to post hundreds of tasks per day as I know this is overwhelming and whilst many parents have been keen to replicate a school day this simply isn't possible, practical or healthy for you or your children. As we resume our new 'normal' after the holidays, teachers will issue tasks through our blog and be assured you absolutely should not be completing every task in the one day, this wouldn't represent any real understanding or reinforcement for children if they are expected to move on from one task to the next in rapid succession. There's usually a lot of oral teaching surrounding every task in class each day and we do not expect you to do this at home.

For example, if a list of spelling words is issued, this is for the week and most pupils can explain what sort of tasks they complete in class. It wouldn't be right for us to issue all words for the rest of the year. Any reading is better than none and children will enjoy reading about something they like. Times table practice, even just for a few minutes at a time is wonderful. Ask your child regularly to tell you the time from an analogue/digital clock. Can they take 5 minutes to tell you a bit about a book, article or comic that they're reading? Can they explain to you (a very old, *old* person) in clear steps how their favourite computer game works? If they write some of this feedback down, then even better. The old adage 'Quality not Quantity' really does apply in these circumstances. We've always dreamed of having more quality time with our children and now we have it (maybe more than expected), we should not ruin it by creating an anxious environment in our homes filled with the demands of parenting, home working and home schooling.

As I've said, I've asked our teachers to try to switch off for the Easter break but please do feel free to email me if you need any support with anything over the weekends or during the holiday period, I'll be keeping on top of emails and Twitter and will be more than happy to hear from you (distraction from my own 3 children who are never full, always bored, always sighing and always loud, would be no bad thing).

From myself and all school staff, I hope you have a nice Easter break (if you get one) and you're able to be kind to yourselves without feeling guilty about what you think you should be doing.

God Bless,

Martyn Dinsmor

Head Teacher (HT@st-patricks-motherwell.n-lanark.sch.uk)