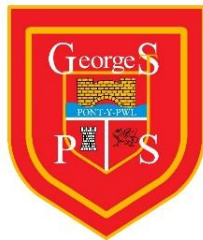


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**YSGOL GYNRADD A MEITHRIN STRYD SIORS
GEORGE STREET PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL**

Wainfelin Road, Pontypool, Torfaen NP4 6BX

Friday 3rd April 2020

Dear Parents,

Firstly, I hope that you and your family and friends are well. Secondly, that you are following the guidance and doing everything you can at this difficult time to keep each other safe.

I am sure that a little while ago none of us thought we would be ending the term with schools closed and the country in lockdown. It is a massively challenging time for everyone. Whether you are still working in an essential service, working from home, supporting others or looking after family we wish you well.

I would also like to thank children and parents for engaging so positively with home-learning over the last two weeks. I understand that this is not an easy task, particularly when combined with the many other demands on you at this point. Teachers have been working hard to plan activities and resources and to provide feedback to benefit children's learning. We are very grateful for your support. The uptake through Seesaw has been extremely positive and I feel that we are fortunate to have in place a system that is generally working very well. Innovation and ingenuity are definitely thriving in this new set-up and it has been great to see children and adults finding creative ways to work, to communicate and to support one another.

The official end of term is today and the school's 'Easter holiday' will run for the next two weeks until we start again on Monday 20th April. During this time, teachers will not set work for children. However, we will be using time to look at how we can continue to provide home-learning in an effective and manageable way during the summer term.

With this in mind, we would appreciate constructive feedback on home-learning to date so that we can consider this when developing our plans for next term. In particular, it would be helpful to know about:

- Any difficulties you have experienced in accessing home learning
- Your view on the quantity and type of work being set and completed
- Any suggestions you have for work to be undertaken next term

As you are probably aware, George Street has been open over the last two weeks as a Hub school for the children of essential workers in the area. We have coordinated with heads from neighbouring schools to make sure that this provision is sustained. Staff from Padre Pio, Penygarn, New Inn, Griffithstown and Ysgol Panteg are all participating in the work of the Hub and we very much appreciate the shared commitment they have shown. Likewise, our thanks go to playworkers from Torfaen Play and members of the Sports Development team who are in school every day to continue this work.

Together we live learn and value

The Hub will remain open in George Street over the Easter period and a number of our staff will be in school between Saturday 4th and Friday 10th April. You are welcome to ring the school during this time to speak with members of staff about home-learning, or to discuss any other matters that we may be able to help with. Alternatively, I would welcome your feedback/queries through Seesaw or by email at:

head.georgestreetprimary@torfaen.gov.uk

We are very mindful of the fact that enjoying family time is very important at the moment too. We are keen to get the balance right to help children learn while enabling family life to function happily. This will look different from family to family depending on individual circumstances. For all of us it is a challenge. I know that some parents have felt overwhelmed trying to help children complete work while managing many other demands on your time. Similarly, a few children have felt anxious about keeping up with what is being set. Can I urge all parents to exercise your own judgement about where the right balance is to be found for you and your children. This is a learning curve for everyone and no two households are alike. Taking a little time each day to work together on the life skills suggested is a good place to start, as is holding to the idea of “quality over quantity”.

We don't yet know how long the current measures will remain in place, or indeed when schools will reopen. It seems highly likely that this will not be for a considerable time, possibly not until a point in the next academic year. The implications of this for all of our pupils, and especially those who will be moving to the next step in their learning in Year 7 are very much on our minds. Schools, the local authority and Welsh Government will be collaborating in the weeks and months ahead to look at how best we can support all pupils and families so that we can all move forward confidently when we reach more familiar times.

In the meanwhile, we shall have to be patient, pull together and remain positive so that we can be of help to one another.

 Wishing you and your family well,

Mr A Brasington