



Aston St. Mary's Newsletter

Our value this half term is Forgiveness

www.astonmarys.herts.sch.uk

3rd April 2020

Dear parents and carers,

So, today is the final day of the Spring term and quite unlike any other end of terms any of us have experienced before. Today we should have celebrated Easter in church and then returned to school for the traditional Aston egg-rolling competition. This is an event unique to our school – it will, no doubt, be egg-tra egg-citing next year (sorry!).

Despite the current situation and restrictions on our lives, we would encourage you to ensure that your child does now get a two-week break. Obviously, this will look quite different from other school holidays as we all must stay at home and are only allowed contact with those with whom we live. These are tough times for all of us; for a young child, who perhaps doesn't fully understand the reasons behind the restrictions, it must be so much more difficult to comprehend. It goes without saying that time will be spent as a family but try to make sure that there are plenty of opportunities to have fun and laugh together – whether it be by watching a film, playing a game, painting a picture, exercising together, cooking or simply curling up with a book.

On the final day of school before closure, the children were given Home Learning packs. These contained plenty to keep them going over the past two weeks. We hope that you have found them helpful. Please continue to use these after the Easter break if there is still more to do. It is wonderful that the majority of children have already been active on their Seesaw accounts (Years 1-6); we have been so impressed by the range of home learning that has been shared on here. Seesaw enables teachers to continue to move the children's learning forward thorough the activities that they set and also the feedback that they are able to provide. After Easter, learning activities will be set on a regular basis on Seesaw. Please check regularly what has been posted and try to ensure that your child completes the tasks set - this will be our only way of ensuring we continue to cover the curriculum during the period of closure. For those of you not yet familiar with how it works, the following tutorial may be helpful:

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=W9FyB1SCbeM&feature=youtu.be>

Remember, you can also contact us via the email address below should you have any difficulties with online access, login details or anything else – school might be closed for the time being, but we are still here for each and every one of you. We want to help - in whatever way we can.

Tapestry will continue to be used as the online learning platform for Shackadell class; we know that lots of you have found this really helpful already.

As well as home learning set by us, there are lots more ideas and resources being provided online; it is wonderful to see how we as a nation are pulling together with so many people sharing ideas for the benefit of our children. Some websites are suggested on the class pages (and are not limited to any particular class) – but you'll probably be able to find lots more yourselves. We would encourage you to share anything that you find particularly useful with other families – or let us know and we can perhaps include recommendations on future newsletters.

Aston families will continue to remain in our thoughts and our prayers throughout the Easter break. Please take care, follow the government guidance and remember: **STAYING AT HOME WILL SAVE LIVES.**

Should you need to contact us, for whatever reason, please use the temporary email address:

closed@astonmarys.herts.sch.uk

Shackadell Class

Hi Shackadell,

We are missing you very much, but we are really enjoying seeing everything that you have been doing at home. We hope you have enjoyed our little videos and tasks. We can see that you have been coming up with lots of your own fantastic ideas as well!

During the Easter holidays we would love for you to really enjoy yourselves by being super creative and having lots of fun.

Maybe you could make some Easter eggs using play-doh, or even lego!



Or you could use your card making skills to make Easter cards for people in your family.



If you have a spare potato, you could try potato printing some Easter eggs.



We are sure that you have read your reading books a few times over already so here are some useful links to find age appropriate reading material:

<https://home.oxfordowl.co.uk/>

www.teachyourmonstertoread.com/

<https://readingeggs.co.uk/> (free trial)

Have you also tried looking for 3D animals on google? We have enjoyed this with our children at home. Try googling 'tiger facts' and you will find a way of bringing a tiger to your own living room!

And lastly.... Easter at Aston St Mary's wouldn't be the same without our very favourite song 'Spring Chicken'! - enjoy this one <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IEey4LZLeGw>

We miss you very much and can't wait to see you all on Tapestry soon,

Mrs Holmes and Mrs Lale

Peartree Class

Hello Peartree.

Hooray!

We have all survived week two of 'home learning' and a very big well done to you all.

Thank you for working so diligently these two weeks on the packs that we sent home but now it is the time for a well-deserved rest.

It is now the Easter holidays and a time to celebrate safely with your family. I really want you to enjoy this time and not worry about 'home learning' at all.

Although there are some things that I would like you to try if you wish.

We have obviously missed some of the run up to Easter events which we love and do every year at this time.

Maybe you could:

- Make an Easter bonnet/hat.
- Decorate a hard-boiled egg and have an 'egg rolling' contest.
- Make your family an Easter card.
- Phone/video call a friend or loved one.
- Write a prayer.
- Make (and eat) Hot Cross Buns. <https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/hot-cross-buns>

I know I'm not in the class with you,

But remember I'm there in all you do.

If you need help, please just ask.

Nothing is too big whatever the task.

Please stay safe whilst we're under this cloud

And know that you will always make me proud.



See you all soon



Mrs Baker

Orchard Class



Hello Orchard!

Well done on completing two weeks of home learning! A huge well done to your parents for supporting you with this as well! I have really enjoyed seeing all of your wonderful work and the videos of you reading. Over the Easter holidays make sure you take a break and enjoy yourselves.

For fun, you could:

- Create an Easter card



- Decorate a hard-boiled egg (if you have one)



- Egg rolling
- Look for signs of spring (I have uploaded a template to seesaw)



I hope you enjoy this time with your families.

Miss O'Brien

Haffydown Class

Hi Haffydown,

I am so proud of all the learning you have been doing at home over these past two weeks. Home learning can be very tricky, especially in these difficult times. However, you have been amazing at keeping your learning going and I have loved seeing your pictures, messages and videos on Seesaw.

Some of you may have seen on Mrs Winwood's email that I have been feeling poorly this week. I have had a cough and sore throat, but I am feeling much better now. Staying at home has kept myself and others safe. Thank you for all your kind messages.

It is important that over Easter you take a break and that you and your families have plenty of time to rest and have lots of fun together. For this reason, my activity ideas this week will all have a fun Easter theme!

Easter activity ideas:

- Egg hunt! Set up an egg hunt at home either with chocolate eggs or you could draw some small pictures of eggs to hide. You could even write clues to help your family find the eggs!
- Make an Easter garden. This activity was a favourite of mine when I was little. It is a perfect way of remembering the reason why we celebrate Easter. Providing you have some sort of tray; it can be made using things you will probably already have in your garden or local park.



- Make an Easter bonnet. Post your pictures on Seesaw to show off your creative designs.
- If, like me, you are disappointed to not be going to church to sing our favourite Easter songs, then do not worry! I have found some shorter versions of our Easter songs on You Tube which you can sing and dance too at home:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4BJLRCGNNWQ> spring chicken

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ovUPYvJ22PY> sing a joyful song

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RZ6XWOaeSNs&list=PLxybjfxLKz_ycANO79qr4LKxxBKcOA3s9&index=19 Easter jubilation

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iOJ9CqsVmLk&list=PLxybjfxLKz_ycANO79qr4LKxxBKcOA3s9&index=17 when I think about the cross

Have a wonderful Easter break.

See you soon,

Miss Keen x



Danes Class



Hi Danes,

What an amazing group of young people you are! I have been absolutely overwhelmed by the amount of Seesaw posts this week – it is wonderful that you are using Seesaw to share such a wide range of activities and news. Obviously, this is a great way for me to keep track on your learning but, equally importantly, it is just lovely to know that you are safe and happy and enjoying yourselves. I have heard children read; met their pets; checked their maths; listened to them play their musical instruments; read their prayers; enjoyed their artwork; smiled at their chatty messages; found out what they know already about our new science topic; been amazed by their trampolining skills and so much more ... all through Seesaw. For those of you who I have not yet heard from, please make sure you are checking the posts and I will look forward to catching up with you on Seesaw after the Easter break (any problems, just get your parents to email).

Looking for ideas for the Easter break? You could:

- Bake a Simnel cake



- Make an Easter bonnet – you could post a picture on Seesaw if you wish.
- Make Easter cards for family and friends who you can't see at the moment – then post them whilst out on a walk.



- Decorate some hard-boiled eggs (if you can manage to buy any!) and either:
 - put them on neighbours' doorsteps to make them smile (again, do this with an adult whilst on a walk!)
 - organise your own egg rolling competition

Danes, we might not be at school right now, but I am still your teacher so thank you for keeping in touch and working so hard. Please continue to stay safe; enjoy the Easter break (and make sure you do take a break!); keep smiling and remember to:



Laugh everyday.
Enjoy time with your families.
Stay positive.
Stay safe. Stay happy. Stay inside.
And have fun!
Bless you all,
Mrs Branagan



x



**We hope that many of our families will
want to contribute to this community
project in response to Covid-19**

Covid-19 photographic project

Arc of Hope

Be a rainbow in someone's cloud.

Maya Angelou

Please submit photos to be part of this school community installation.

In response to the huge community spirit emerging during these dark days of uncertainty and the message of hope that Rainbows for the NHS are bringing, we will be creating a digital rainbow to submit to the Royal Academy of Arts to be part of this year's Young Artists' Summer Show.

The idea is that families dress, drape or paint themselves in one of the colours of the rainbow. Then take a photo or selfie and send it in.

The photos will be collated and digitally arranged to form a rainbow made up of all of your photos.

The digital rainbow will be a symbol of hope, of standing together as a community, circumventing isolation.

Tips for excellent photos:

- Smile! We want the rainbow to show the overwhelming positivity in our community, despite the very challenging circumstances.
- Include as many family members in the photo as you can. (Although do send in photos of children on their own too.)
- Include a background wall or other items of the same colour in the photo.
- Please take photos/selfies for as many colours as you can. Take more than one photo for each colour too. We need lots and lots of photos for each colour!

Please also send close up photos of rainbows you have made in support of the NHS. Please send your photos to the correct email address:

red@woolenwickinfants.herts.sch.uk

orange@woolenwickinfants.herts.sch.uk

yellow@woolenwickinfants.herts.sch.uk

green@woolenwickinfants.herts.sch.uk

blue@woolenwickinfants.herts.sch.uk

purple@woolenwickinfants.herts.sch.uk

rainbow@woolenwickinfants.herts.sch.uk

Deadline Friday 10th April – one week.

(Please see examples below)

We stand together; together we are stronger

IMPORTANT REMINDER

Please make sure that you include our school name with any photos that you submit – this won't be used in the artwork but will ensure that **Aston St. Mary's** will be credited in the final installation when it is submitted to the Royal Academy. Thank you.





HOLY WEEK - Activities for families

- Re-create the **last Supper** using lego/duplo/playmobil
http://thebricktestament.com/the_life_of_jesus/the_last_supper/mt26_20.jpg
- Make an **Easter Garden** – grow some grass seed on a large plate. Once the grass has grown add a flowerpot for the tomb, a small piece of white cloth to put inside, a large stone, a cross made from twigs and twine, and a candle. Roll back the stone on Easter Day! (Alternative Easter Gardens – use lettuce for the grass and vegetables to create the tomb, flowers and cross! Or make a similar scene using biscuits, icing and sprinkles!)
- Missing Church? Why not **make a model** using a cereal boxes and other recyclable materials?
- Watch a 26min **Easter animation** on youtube – search for ‘The story of Easter – The Beginner’s Bible’
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0PSgoPdKQFQ>
- Make an **Easter Tree** together – decorate pussy willow branches with feathers, ribbons, and pompoms. You could also make an Easter wreath for your door using the same materials.
- On Maundy Thursday hold a **foot washing** session with the dolls in your house and read the story in a children’s Bible.
- Make **hot cross buns** for Good Friday. There are lots of recipes online, or you can have fun making them out of playdough/salt dough. You could try making mini ones out of fimo for dolls in a dolls house.
<https://www.sunhatsandwellieboots.com/2012/04/play-dough-hot-cross-buns.html>
- Find out **how Easter is celebrated in other countries** and why it is celebrated on different days!
- Listen to the hymn ‘**Lord of the Dance**’ on the internet and have a dance around the living room!

- **How many words can you make from 'EASTER'?** I got 19 words...how about you?
 - Hold a **Resurrection Scavenger Hunt** in your house or garden. There are lots on the internet, eg: <http://homesweetroad.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/easter-scavenger-hunt-printable1-791x1024.jpg>
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For older children/youth

- Music is a great way to unwind and de-stress. It can also open our hearts to the spiritual side of life in profound ways. If you have Spotify or another music download app you could make an Easter playlist for your family. Try exploring different types of Christian music, here are some examples to search on youtube or on a music app:

Traditional:

'There is a Green Hill Far Away', 'Here I am Lord', 'When I survey the wondrous cross', 'A New Commandment', 'Brother Sister let me serve you'. Easter Day: 'Jesus Christ is Risen today', 'Thine be the Glory'

Worship Songs:

Brenton Brown - 'Lord Reign in Me' and 'Your love is amazing'
Hillsong - 'Here I am to worship', 'Still', and 'Shout to the Lord'

Taize Chants are repetitive to help meditation and prayer:

'Stay with me'
'O Lord hear my prayer'

Please let us know which is you or your family's favourite hymn/song to listen to during Holy Week! We can then compile a list to share ☺

Prayers with Children

Before praying, it is suggested that there is a discussion with the children about the people and places they wish to pray for.

A prayer remembering God is with us

Lord God, you are always with me. You are with me in the day and in the night. You are with me when I'm happy and when I'm sad. You are with me when I'm healthy and when I am ill. You are with me when I am peaceful and when I am worried. Today I am feeling *(name how you are feeling)* because *(reasons you are feeling this way)*. Help me to remember that you love me and are with me in everything today. **Amen.**

A prayer for when a friend is ill

Dear God, *(name of friend)* is ill. They are not allowed to go to school or come over to play. I'm sad because I miss them. They must be feeling miserable and lonely as well. Please be close to them. Please be with the people who are looking after them. Please help them to get better and to know that you love them. **Amen.**

A prayer for the world

God of love and hope, you made the world and care for all creation, but the world feels strange right now. The news is full of stories about Coronavirus. Some people are worried that they might get ill. Others are anxious for their family and friends. Be with them and help them to find peace. We pray for the doctors and nurses and scientists, and all who are working to discover the right medicines to help those who are ill. Thank you that even in these anxious times, you are with us. Help us to put our trust in you and keep us safe. **Amen.**

A prayer at bedtime

Before the ending of the day, Creator of the world, we pray That you, with steadfast love, would keep Your watch around us while we sleep. Tonight we pray especially for *(names family or friends who are affected by Coronavirus)* and the people of *(country or place which is affected by Coronavirus)*. Please give skill and wisdom to all who are caring for them. **Amen**