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Dear Parents

Who was to ever think little over a month ago, that schools would be closed and children working from home? As many of our teachers and support staff are parents themselves, we were aware that home learning will be challenging, not only for parents and children, but for teachers as well.

We have listed a number of considerations to assist you in making choices and help put things into perspective at this unprecedented time. The difficulties that each of us face is a global challenge and we can learn from each other.

We do realise that home situations may be different and parents will have their own routines that suit their own circumstances, but please consider the following suggestions:

- ✚ Your child does not need to put in 5 hours of school work every day. An hour or two of *learning type* activities is plenty along with some free time, practical activity and physical activity. These may be spread over short periods of time, or days.
- ✚ Remember that you cannot expect to be your child's full time teacher, run a home and possibly have your own job to do from home as well. Prioritise! If you are worrying that you are not doing enough, we can assure you that you probably are doing more than enough, and the fact you are re-evaluating what you are doing, proves you are planning and in control of things.
- ✚ Let your child have some screen time if it preserves *your* sanity. There are lots of quality resources online (see list included in your home learning pack, as well as daily TV programme schedules). We can do a digital detox when this is all over!
- ✚ Don't stress about your child completing everything we are sending to you now or managing all the online activities sent through SEESAW. Responding to this pandemic is not a 'sprint' it is a 'marathon', and work can be spread over days and weeks. Your child's emotional welfare and your family's welfare is more important right now.
- ✚ Don't argue or fight with them about doing their work (easy for us to say)! Small rewards go a long way! We need all the positivity and support we can get at the moment for children and parents. Try to find a balance that works for you and your family. Every child in the world is in the same boat. When we return to a more normal schooling situation we will get them all 'caught up'! Please cherish this extra time with your children, do what you can in the circumstances and when this pandemic is over we look forward to being back in our classrooms.

Please continue to email us photos of your child's learning experiences – we love to see their happy faces. Teachers will be in contact via email / SEESAW with details regarding further learning activities. If you have any queries please email: info@stmarysps.cushendall.ni.sch.uk to contact us.

Please stay safe.

Helen Magee
Mrs Helen Magee
Principal

Principal: Mrs Helen Magee
BA (QTS) Hons, PQH (NI)