



## The same – but different

20<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I'm finding this one the hardest to write because it comes at the water-shed moment for us all. The day, after which our new way of being will begin. I am sure I am not alone in having shed some tears over the things I was looking forward to that will now not happen, and being to some extent in mourning for the day to day interactions which until recently I was taking so utterly for granted and will now be limited. There is a sense of fear and anxiety as well, of course – the paths ahead of us are ones we haven't trodden before. There are great challenges ahead.

And yet these past few weeks have also been filled with huge camaraderie amongst the amazing staff team. Good humour, creativity, and generosity of spirit are in abundance. Selflessness, acts of kindness and words of encouragement can be seen and heard at every turn. We have been buoyed up and sustained by your messages of support, and the real sense that we are all in this together.

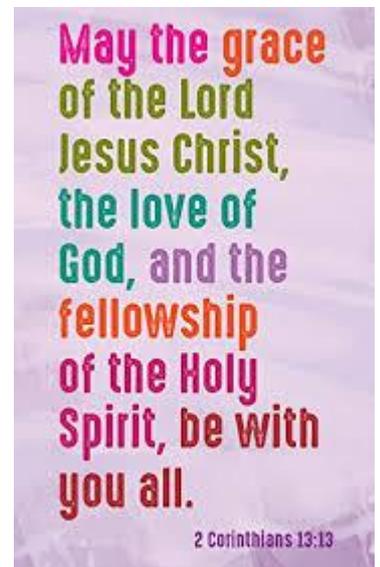
It is this spirit of community, this sense of family, and common purpose, underpinned by our shared sense of fun and delight in each other's achievements that I am determined we will not lose as we step into this next phase of our journey together. We need to walk this path with our heads held high – showing our children that although the ways we are doing things may be different, the things which are important and bind us together are constant.

Of course the other thing that is constant for the children, as I have made very clear in school, is that I am still their Headteacher and the school year is not over yet! The St Mary's standards of behaviour still apply – only now it might be you telling me that they are not managing rather than me telling you. I want to see the St Mary's learning behaviours, of curiosity, collaboration and resilience shining through. I expect them to rise to the challenge to contribute more to life at home – maybe the next Master Chef, or Bake Off champion will emerge as a result. Or maybe time invested now will bring us the next Young Musician of the Year, or sporting champion, or artist, or coding genius. It doesn't matter what they are learning, so long as they ARE learning – and I will be checking!

This is not goodbye. We're just turning a corner now – and we will continue the journey together.

My thoughts and prayers are with you all.

Sarah Lewis



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