



Bodsham Church of England  
Primary School

Federation  
of



Saltwood Church of England  
Primary School



For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations – *Psalm 100:4-5*

8<sup>th</sup> May 2020

### **It's Good To Talk**

Teachers have been sharing some of this week's conversations with parents and children with me. What's becoming very clear is that no two families are taking the same approach to life in lockdown! Most children are attempting elements of the home learning being provided by teachers each day, but it is also the case that very few children are getting through it all. This is not something I would be concerned about – I've noticed the same with my own children at home. The most important thing for children is the feeling of safety created when their lives involve a predictable routine. So if you are able to timetable a bit of home learning, even for an hour or two each day you will be giving them that feeling.

A word that has cropped up in some conversations with parents is 'meltdown'. If you are finding your child having such episodes during the day, take some comfort that it is happening in other households too. These meltdowns can be prompted by asking children to complete tasks they either don't enjoy or don't feel confident with. We do this all the time at school but rarely see such responses – this is because children feel safer to express their feelings with you at home, so parents will naturally bear the brunt of this.

So how to avoid these 'meltdowns'? Well, as I have said before, feel free to adapt or reduce the home learning to suit your child. One common problem seems to be getting children, particularly boys, to write. If this is an issue for you then improvise – ask them to TELL you what they want to say while you scribe, for example. Or just talk about what they COULD write, without asking them to complete the task. Feel free not to attempt tasks like that at all if you can see it will create a problem. It is much better at this time to give children things to do that will make them feel good – lots of parents have said they understand their children's learning habits much better now, so play to their strengths. If they're good at maths, do lots of maths! In a time of great uncertainty and background worry, the feeling of achievement and self-validation that comes from completing a task successfully is worth more than anything.

### **VE Day**

Today is the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Allied Victory in Europe. Celebrations to mark the event have been curtailed by the virus, but there are still ways to remember our heroes from WW2 at home. There will be a two minute's silence at 11am and there are [lots of ideas for celebrating the event with children online](#). There are also some excellent articles about the celebrations in this week's First News newspaper for children which is attached.



### **Book Your Parent 'Meeting'**

Teachers have begun telephoning all families to check how everyone is doing. We'd really like to speak to everyone over the next week or so, so if you haven't yet booked an appointment, please email your teacher directly with some convenient times for a chat and the number you'd like them to call.

### **Keep Reading! – The Little Book of Hopes**

Mrs Nash at Saltwood has found a [lovely online book for children to read](#) that will lift the spirits. Completely free for all children and families, the extraordinary collection of short stories, poems, essays and pictures has contributions from more than 110 children's writers and illustrators, including Lauren Child, Anthony Horowitz, Greg James and Chris Smith, Michael Morpurgo, Liz Pichon, Axel Scheffler, Francesca Simon and Jacqueline Wilson. Enjoy!

### **Returning to School**

There's not much to say about this at this point I'm afraid, although we may learn something from the Prime Minister this weekend. I am sure that we will need to embrace a 'new normal' way of thinking about school for some time after our doors reopen though. It would be a good idea to have such conversations with your children now so they do not expect (or even become anxious about) a mass return to how school used to look without a period of gradual reintroduction.

### **Too Much Screen Time? – Probably, Yes!**

It's ironic how, just a few weeks ago, we were concerned about how much time our children were spending in front of screens and now we are asking them to do all their learning that way. There is no doubt, however, that the digital world has proved a real blessing during lockdown, helping us to keep families in touch and communities such as ours together.

Because it is likely that children will be spending some unsupervised time online these days, parents might want to look at the [home activity packs produced by CEOPS](#) – the National Crime Agency's main online safeguarding agency. There are games for children to play which contain a strong e-safety message along with information and guidance for parents. This is also where both children and parents can report concerns over online abuse.



Take care everyone and stay safe,

*Paul Newton*

Executive Head Teacher