

We can complain because rose bushes have thorns, or rejoice because thorn bushes have roses. *Abraham Lincoln*

I love this quote (not just because it is by my namesake!) but because it is how we can take a view on life and all that is going on today. I have always tried to be a thorn bush with roses/glass half-full person, however it is not easy and over the last year there have been times when this has been a real challenge. I know this is no different for others and I am very aware that for lots of you this year has been filled with times of challenge, upset and anxiety.

Whether it is the spring weather or the 'Road Map' announcement on Monday, I hope that you all might be feeling a greater sense of optimism. It might be that you can start to make tentative plans for a holiday later in the year, or put a pencilled date in the diary to visit family. Both of these are genuinely exciting, and alongside this we now know that we will be able to fully reopen on the 8th March.

I am really excited about the prospect of our school once again being able to offer every one of our children a face-to-face education. I know that some of you may still be anxious about your child/children returning (some of you might be very relieved that your role as a home-school teacher is coming to an end!). However, either way, please be reassured that we will do all we can to continue to make St Nic's safe and ready to 'fully re-open' in a week's time

Have a wonderful weekend, enjoy the sunshine and if you get the chance go out and smell the roses!

Mr Lincoln, Mr Etherton and the St Nic's staff team.

1. COMMUNICATION

- **Website:** please check the website for answers to any queries before contacting the office.
- **Emails:** use office@stnm.org.uk to contact the school with queries – please include your child's class.
- **Positive Test Email:** only use the email positivetest@stnm.org.uk to report a positive COVID test result.
- **School Office:** the office is currently closed. Please refer to the school website for information or email office@stnm.org.uk if you have any queries.
- **Calendar:** term dates, upcoming events etc. This can be filtered by year group to help you find dates relevant to you. Follow the link for instructions on how to [use](#) or [subscribe](#) to the calendar.
- **Letters/Emails sent home this week:** click on the link for past letters:
<http://www.stnicolasmary.w-sussex.sch.uk/page/?title=Letters+Sent+Home&pid=56>
 - YR: Audiology letter
 - ALL: St Clements Update

2. WORSHIP & ETHOS:

I will say of the Lord, "He in my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust." Psalms 91:2

Next week as well as our latest Awesome Assembly the children will be celebrating the joy of books and reading through our assembly and worship time.

3. RE-OPENING:

Next week we will be sharing more information with parents regarding reopening information for the 8th March. We did however feel it was useful to share a few thoughts and a government document this week:

Preparation for returning:

- **Uniform:** Do take the time to check that your child's uniform still fits (children grow very fast!). We will be continuing with winter uniform until the Easter holiday break. (Please also remember to remind the children about not wearing bright coloured hair accessories/hair gel.)
- **Lockdown work:** The teachers are really looking forward to physically seeing the work the children have produced over lockdown when they return on the 8th March. Please continue to encourage your child to keep going with this next week.
- **Bedtime habits/routines:** Understandably some children will have had different timings/routines around bedtime over the lockdown period. We would strongly encourage children to use next week as preparation for getting back into a 'school week' sleeping routine. We all know the positive impact of getting the right amount of sleep on childrens' learning.

- Do take the time to read the latest document: 'What parents need to know about schools during Covid-19' Updated advice from the Department for Education:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/what-parents-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-covid-19>

4. INFORMATION ABOUT UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Red Nose Day - 19th March:** we are looking forward to joining in with all the Red Nose Day fun! More details about the day will be sent out soon.
- **Inset Day - 26th April:** please note the date on the previous bulletin was incorrect, sorry for any confusion.
- **Y3 Drusillas Trip - 24th June:** due to circumstances beyond our control we have had to postpone the Drusillas trip until June. We are hoping that restrictions will have been lifted and that we can take the children later in the year. More details about the trip will be sent out closer to the time.
- **Y6 Dalesdown Residential:** polite reminder that the first instalment should be paid by Sunday 28th February via your sQuid account.

5. **GOOGLE CLASSROOM:** Please do look on our Home Learning section on the school website for updated information on how to support your child with google classrooms. This includes information about how to upload work. <http://www.stnicolasmary.w-sussex.sch.uk/page/?title=Home+Learning&pid=1569>

6. HOME LEARNING

- **Useful Links and Resources:** please do look at the Useful Links and Resources section on our Home Learning section of the school website for additional resources to use alongside Google Classroom. <http://www.stnicolasmary.w-sussex.sch.uk/page/?title=Useful+Links+and+Resources&pid=1415>

7. **OCTOPUS BREAKFAST & STARFISH AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS:** Just a reminder that if you require your child to attend Octopus or Starfish club, please book them in beforehand, via your sQuid account.

8. **FREE SCHOOL MEAL VOUCHERS:** Parents of eligible children should soon receive a voucher in their email inbox covering the two week period for weeks commencing 22nd February and 1st March. The entitlement is for a £15 voucher per child per week.

9. **CHARTWELLS HOT SCHOOL DINNERS:** Meal Selector is now open for KS2 Parents to commence ordering meals from the 8th March.

10. **LITTLE FISHES NURSERY - 30 HOUR FREE CHILDCARE CODE REMINDER:** Just a reminder to apply now to ensure you have renewed your 30 hours free childcare code by 31st March 2021. Log in to your childcare account to check your details are up to date, and reconfirm your eligibility by 31st March 2021 to ensure you continue to be eligible for 30 hours free childcare - gov.uk/sign-in-childcare-account. Contact the HMRC helpline if you are experiencing issues applying or reconfirming on 0300 1234 097.

11. **GIRLS FOOTBALL:** We are looking to see who would be interested in joining our KS2 girls after school football club. If your daughter is interested please can they put their name down on the sign up sheets on the clubs board outside the staff room. They will need to indicate which days they are available to attend. We will be in contact with more information as soon as possible.

12. **WRITING COMPETITION:** West Sussex Virtual School are running a creative writing competition for children aged 5-18 years about 'Living in Lockdown'. Submit either a 500 word short story or 200 word graphic novel to WSVS@westsussex.gov.uk by 22nd April. Please put 'Writing Competition' in the subject line and include the child's name and age in the email.

- 13. MENTAL HEALTH WEEK:** We do hope that you and your family found our week dedicated to thinking about mental health helpful. Although 'Mental Health Week' is over, it is obviously a matter at the forefront of our minds all year round. Please do take time to look at the links on our school website (referred to in the recent letter that outlined the week) and be in contact with your child's class teacher if you have any concerns or are in need of support. If you and your family would like to share any of the activities that you completed as part of the half term well-being jigsaw puzzle or other Mental Health Week activities then we would love to see them. Please email them into office@stnm.org.uk FAO Miss Wing. Many thanks
- 14. HEARTS OF GOLD:** Many thanks to all the children and families who made hearts of gold to add to their windows over the Valentine's Day weekend, to bring hope and joy to others, in support of the NHS Heads On charity. Heads On have asked for some photos of the hearts on display and so if you would like to show off your artwork, please send in a photo to me via the office at office@stnm.org.uk. Many thanks Mrs Bishop

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS ACTIVITIES CLUB

**EASTER HOLIDAYS
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Certificate of Appreciation

This certificate is awarded for participating in

Hearts of Gold

Thank you so much for supporting the patients and staff of
Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and raising awareness
for mental health in your community.



Reg. Charity No 1051736

