



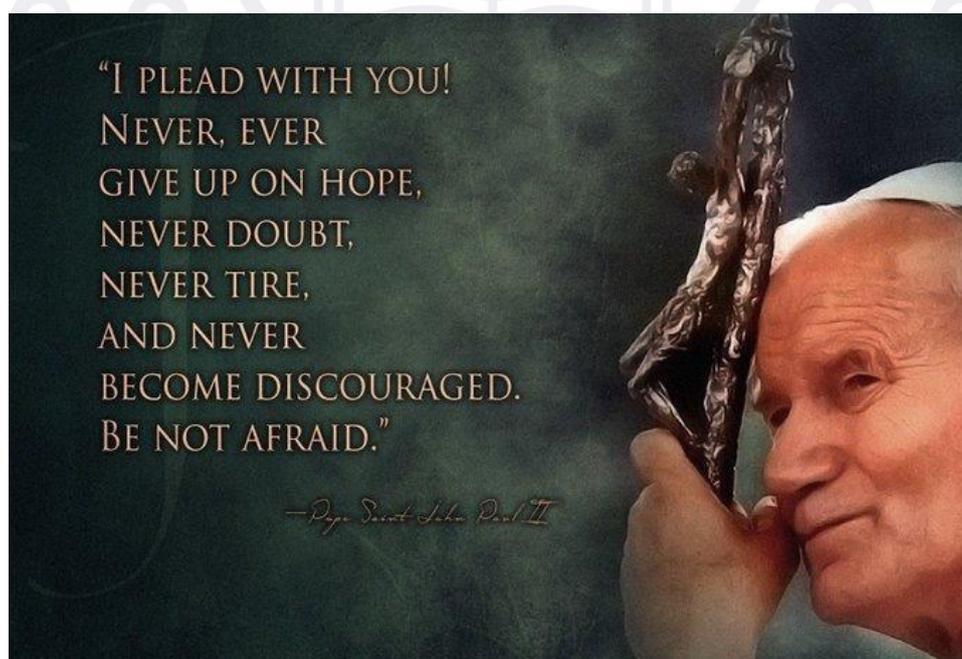
E-Briefing for Parents, Carers and Students Easter Holiday Update

Happy Easter

We very much hope that you have managed to celebrate the feast of Easter at home and 'virtually' across the many online platforms that have facilitated ongoing prayer and reflection. On Easter Sunday this year, Pope Francis echoed the words of St John Paul II and reminded us that the Easter message is a message of hope for everyone. During Mass on Easter Sunday morning he said from St Peter's Basilica *"so, let us not give in to resignation; let us not place a stone before hope. We can and must hope, because God is faithful. He did not abandon us; he visited us and entered into our situations of pain, anguish and death. His light dispelled the darkness of the tomb: today he wants that light to penetrate even to the darkest corners of our lives. Dear sister, dear brother, even if in your heart you have buried hope, do not give up: God is greater. Darkness and death do not have the last word. Be strong, for with God nothing is lost!"*

Pope Francis' full Homily is available here:

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2020-04/pope-francis-homily-easter-vigil-full-text.html>





Parent & Student Questionnaire

Thank you to all parents, carers and students who were able to participate in our recent questionnaire regarding home learning work being set on Ruler during the current school closure.

There were 421 responses in total with significantly more students completing the survey than parents and carers. 72% of student responses came from Key Stage 3.

The following conclusions were evident:

1. The majority of respondents believed the amount of work currently set to be 'about the right amount' (65% of parents / 56% of students).
2. A small number of parents believed that there was not enough work being set and a small number of parents stated there was too much work being set.
3. A minority of students (0.7%) believed there was not enough work being set and a significant number of students (44%) believed that there was too much work being set.
4. The most common home learning activities included work completed in exercise books and on-line activities such as Seneca and Hegarty.
5. The vast majority of respondents stated that over 8 hours of home learning was being completed each week.
6. A minority of students, parents and carers (4%) stated that the work provided could not usually be completed by students independently.
7. The majority of parent and carer responses indicated that students completed their work effectively.
8. 29% of students stated that they sometimes did not fully understand how to complete the work that was set compared with 18% who said that they always fully completed the work independently.
9. Approximately two thirds of students and parents said that the work-logs were being completed regularly.

It is encouraging to hear that the systems and processes we put in place at very short notice are positively supporting learning at home, and the school will look to respond appropriately to the findings over the coming weeks. The work set on Ruler is self-directed distance learning and is there to supplement the curriculum, not replace it. It is, however, important to remind ourselves that students do not need to complete all of the work set on Ruler as outlined in the FAQs document on our school website:



How important is it that my child completes all work set on Ruler?

We always expect all students to work to the very best of their ability and the aim is that all students complete all work set. However, we understand that, in these uncertain times, it may not always be possible for all students to complete all work set. There may be times when, due to a range of factors, for example ill health, the work completed is at the discretion of the student's family.

Sincere thanks to all the staff who are updating tasks every week, to the students who are conscientiously completing what they can amongst the other demands of home life at present, and to the parents and carers who continue to offer their support and guidance.

Free School Meals

Following the announcement of a national free school meal voucher scheme, the Government have confirmed it would be extended over the Easter holidays as well as term time. All known free school meal eligible students have been enrolled onto the scheme and their family should have received an e-voucher via e-mail (or post if applicable), to cover the period 9th-24 April. Further vouchers will be sent assuming the school closure situation continues. There have been some operational issues with the system affecting all schools which has created delays so it is possible that parents may not have received an e-mail yet. If you have not heard anything or have any further questions about the scheme, please contact school via t.leech@st-nicholas.cheshire.sch.uk

Government Provision of Online Learning

The Department for Education has itself provided additional resources to support learning provided by schools. These resources are applicable to different ages, including younger children and should be seen as wider reading rather than integral to our schemes of learning here at St Nicholas. Should you wish to access these resources then they can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-online-education-resources/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-online-education-resources-for-home-education>

2020 Summer Exam Results

The Secretary of State has confirmed that this year's GCSE students will get their results on Thursday 20 August, while those who are awaiting A level results will get theirs on Thursday 13 August. These dates are the same as those published at the start of this academic year.



Foodbank Referral System

Whilst we hope that everyone is coping well with the present situation, this is a difficult time and we appreciate that there may be some families who are undergoing hardship because of changes in work or personal circumstances. So that we may support our St Nicholas family we have registered as a referral organisation for Mid-Cheshire Foodbank. Usually this would mean issuing vouchers for people to use at their local distribution centre. However, in present circumstances, we are able to process an on-line referral and arrange an appointment for you to collect a three day emergency food package from an agreed centre. For those who are self-isolating, a delivery can be arranged instead, subject to volunteer capacity. Please do contact us via schoolclosure@st-nicholas.cheshire.sch.uk if we can be of help in this manner. As always, our conversation and any information that we need to pass on to the Foodbank, will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Mairie

School Re-Opening

Following Dominic Raab's announcement yesterday that the current 'lock-down' measures must remain in place for at least another three weeks, there has been no confirmation of when schools will re-open. We will ensure that we communicate any information we receive to parents, carers and students as soon as practically possible.