



Emmanuel CE Middle School

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24th April 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Happy Friday to you all! We have had some unbelievable weather since I last wrote a few weeks ago. I seriously hope you are all getting some good family time outside, responsibly of course.

This is a joint bulletin to parents and pupils and perhaps best shared at the same time. Before we shut down, I produced some guidance for staff in anticipation of school closure. A few of the key messages are applicable to everyone, not just staff.

It is vital to form some kind of routine, even trying something new that has always been put off because 'we don't have time to do it'. We know school is not everyone's favourite place at times, but it does provide structure and routine, things we take for granted. Having a routine also provides a sense of purpose, something that is good for our well-being. I am sure staff won't mind me sharing some examples: Mr Foord, Miss Howe and myself have started to play the ukulele. Miss Stinson has a keyboard at home, and she had pushed herself further having shown her capabilities with the ukulele. More on that later. Mr Brennan and Mr Humphries have gone fitness mad and are motivating each other. Mrs Askam is spending more time at her allotment and Mrs Anderson has returned to her yoga. The list is long, and I hope to share more with you in future weeks.

Another key message was around limiting the amount of news people listen to. For all of us, pupils, parents and staff, now it is more important than ever. So many differing opinions about school return and timelines. For now, I want you to ignore all of this. It is highly unlikely we will return in the month of May. Therefore, I want you to focus on your home learning. We have listened to feedback. From Monday you will have three tasks to complete per day. The timetable hasn't changed much in its order. Please, when working online, press the hand-in button. The work is also released the evening before to allow planning and preparation time.

Pupils: you need to do your bit to support your parents. Let's start with contributing around the house. Do something to help support the household routine. For example, my girls get their own breakfast and pack away. They also lay the table in the evening and clear the table afterwards. This is important, it's called social cohesion, but basically, everyone has a role to play and a sense of importance.

The other way of helping your parents is engaging in your work - online or using the packs sent home. You may have to rotate devices, or access time. You may have to help your brother or sister. There will be times where your parents have their own online learning / work to complete. They need to be able to do this. Your part can be to ensure you are able to occupy yourself. You CAN do this. Read, draw, exercise in the garden, so many activities you can do quietly.

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Year 6 and 8 pupils: it's easy to think, 'what's the point?' with SATs gone or we won't be going back. These are just events on a long timeline, in a few years they won't mean anything. However, a lack of engagement now is time you will never get back. It will hold you back for your next event, even if it seems so far away. For example, your GCSE's.

Year 5 and 7 pupils: you are still building towards your events (SATs and transition to Upper School), but time is not on your side. As a school we will do all we can to catch up and support you in this, but we also must look after you as people. Keep working, stay in a routine, it will make the return easier.

BUT, listen to this. You must try, you must have a go at your work. There will be times where you can't get everything done. That is ok! There will be times where you need some help, but other people are tied up, that is ok. All we ask is you try. Endeavour is everything to us, it's why it's one of our core values! What absolutely must not happen is you become anxious about NOT completing the work. We need you safe, we need you to stay calm and look forward to coming back to school. We do not want you to be worried about coming back to school because you have not completed all the work. Do what you can and remember that is different for everyone.

Here are some quotes that you might connect with, help motivate you, help you think about how you feel about things now:

"The starting point of all achievement is desire." --Napoleon Hill

"All our dreams can come true if we have the courage to pursue them." --Walt Disney

"Opportunities don't happen, you create them." --Chris Grosser

"If you want to achieve excellence, you can get there today. As of this second, quit doing less-than-excellent work." --Thomas J. Watson

"Success is liking yourself, liking what you do, and liking how you do it." --Maya Angelou

"People who succeed have momentum. The more they succeed, the more they want to succeed, and the more they find a way to succeed. Similarly, when someone is failing, the tendency is to get on a downward spiral that can even become a self-fulfilling prophecy." -
-Tony Robbins

"The successful warrior is the average man, with laser-like focus." --Bruce Lee

"There is no traffic jam along the extra mile." --Roger Staubach

It is all going to be ok. Have a go at your work but also do cool things with each other, such as baking, paint pictures, go for a family walk etc. Be present with each other and show love and compassion towards each other - and mean it! Start a book and read together as a family. Snuggle under warm blankets and do nothing.

If I can leave you with one thing, it's this: at the end of all of this, your child's mental health will be more important than their academic skills. How they felt during this time will stay with them long after the memory of what they did during those weeks is gone. So, keep that in mind, every single day.

I have a fab staff team at EMS, our very own Miss Stinson has been brave enough to record and post this message to you all, thank you Miss Stinson.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zyro8Des-IE&t=4s>

Stay safe, have a great weekend,
Mr Christopher