



Dear Families,

On Wednesday, the Prime Minister announced that it will not be possible to resume face-to-face learning after the February half-term and instead hopes that it will be safe to commence the reopening of schools from Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021. I know that the announcement would have been disappointing for some of you, but hopefully it won't be long until some form of normality starts to reappear. We all need to be kind to ourselves, accept that we are all going through a very challenging time and we can only do our best. All of the school staff know that those of you who are home learning are trying your best to support your children.

### Mental Health Week

Children's Mental Health Week is taking place on 1-7 February 2021.  
The theme is **Express Yourself**.



**Expressing yourself** is about finding ways to share feelings, thoughts, or ideas, through creativity. This could be through art, music, writing and poetry, dance and drama, photography and film, and doing activities that make you feel good. The children will be directed toward activities throughout the week, but let us know if you and your child express yourselves in different activities.

It is important that we allow children to readily talk about how they are feeling; by talking openly about mental health from a young age, children can learn to better understand their emotions, break down stigma, and feel safe enough to reach out for help when it's needed. Talking about mental health and expressing our feelings can be difficult, no matter our age. During this lockdown, it's more important than ever to share how we're feeling with others and hopefully the children will keep the conversation going once schools return.



On Thursday, we would like the children to 'dress to express'. We would like to encourage the children to express themselves through their clothes, hair etc. while raising vital funds for mental health resources within school. You will be able to donate

via parentpay under 'Express yourself day'. There is no suggested amount as we appreciate anything that you can spare. We will let you know what we purchase.

Pupils are encouraged to wear their favourite colour or choose a range of colours that express how they're feeling. Colour can be very personal and mean different things to different people, so this is a great opportunity to encourage self-expression and celebrate a diverse range of emotions. The staff will give the children a chance to share their outfits in the live lessons.

### Charity

We appreciate your support towards our fundraising activities. Last term, we raised £158 on Jolly Jumper day and £131 on Children in Need day. All of the money has been sent to the charities.

Thank you for your raffle donations and for purchasing the tickets. We raised an amazing £378.50. The money will be spent on outdoor equipment for the children across the whole school. We will let you know what we purchase.

### Food parcels

We are providing food parcels to support families over the February half term holiday, as vouchers are not being provided. The food packs contain tinned food, bread, milk, mince, cheese, fresh vegetables and fresh fruit. Children who receive Free School Meals are entitled to a pack, however, we also want to support any families that need help. To ensure that we do not have any food wastage, you need to opt into this as we had a lot of families who didn't want a parcel when we made them at Christmas. Please let the office know via telephone, email the school office [soffice@stmarysjarrow.co.uk](mailto:soffice@stmarysjarrow.co.uk) or send me a message via ClassDojo. We will let you know when the parcels are ready to collect prior to the holidays, alternatively we can arrange a drop off if you are unable to get to school due to isolation or shielding.

### Celebrations

During 'normal' time in school, teachers reward children with certificates to celebrate hard work or for an excellent piece of work. This will continue during lockdown. If children are in school, they will receive their certificate otherwise it will be posted home.

Have a nice weekend.

Mrs Tumelty  
Acting Head of School.

