

St Pius X Catholic Primary School

& Little Lambs Nursery



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Headteacher: Mr Kevin McGoldrick

Friday, 08 January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

General Information – January 2021

I am writing this letter to provide some general information. I ask all parents and carers to make themselves familiar with its contents. Some of these areas were discussed in the Zoom meeting earlier in the week. If you have any queries or questions regarding anything covered below or about something not covered please get in touch – other parents and carers are probably thinking the same thing.

Remote Learning

I believe our remote learning provision to be of good quality and it exceeds the government's legal requirements. Live Zoom lessons coupled with work set on Tapestry or Showbie enables pupils to continue to learn in the best way possible, as well as allowing them to engage and socially interact with their peers. In addition, it is our intention that the live Zoom lessons will relieve some of the pressure placed on parents and carers who are supporting children at home by having teachers at hand. However, we appreciate younger children will require more support from parents than older children. We understand that live Zoom lessons do not work for all parents. Therefore, all work set on Tapestry and Showbie will have an explanation to allow children and parents the flexibility to access and upload the work at a time more convenient to them. It is important that your child does engage with the remote learning and if they cannot please contact the class teacher via Class Dojo.

Having said the above, it is also important that I stress that parents do not put too much pressure on themselves or their child – being in lockdown is already stressful enough. Everyone's situation is different. If you need help, please tell us.

Devices

We have laptops and Chromebooks at school for families who have no device at home or not enough devices for each child. Please ring the School Office to request a device. Ideally, devices should be collected from school but if you struggle, we can arrange delivery.

Data and Internet Access

If any families are struggling to access the internet, school has some data only sim cards that we can allocate to families. In addition, we can request 4G dongles for those who need them. The government has also announced they will be increasing data allowances on mobile devices to support disadvantaged children. More information can be found at: <https://get-help-with-tech.education.gov.uk/about-increasing-mobile-data>. School must apply for this, so please contact the School Office.

Lunches and Free School Meals

We are currently offering packed lunches to pupils eligible to Universal Infant Free School Meals (Reception to Year 2) and benefits related Free School Meals. Ideally, lunches should be collected from school. However, if you are

'Restore all things in Christ'

struggling to collect, we can arrange daily deliveries. Please ring the School Office to request delivery. Luckily, we have had several parents and governors volunteer to offer a delivery service. There is also an option to order a lunch for your child if they are attending school. All lunches must be ordered via Lunch Shop.

Moving forward, we are hoping to continue with daily packed lunches for collection and delivery. There is a possibility of offering hot lunches for those children in school. However, due to the current low number of packed lunches being ordered, there is a possibility our kitchen provider may close our kitchen. Therefore, I strongly encourage you to order and collect a packed lunch for your child if they are eligible. We are keen to keep our own kitchen running. If our kitchen were to close, we would have to collect lunches from another school, which would reduce the flexibility offered by having our own kitchen operating.

We recognise that some families do not meet the criteria for free school meals but may struggle during that national lockdown due to a change in circumstances. If you need support, please do not hesitate to contact school and we may be able to offer packed lunches. In addition, we can refer families for food packages. Once again, Schneider Road Community Hub has offered their support to school families.

Assemblies

I will continue to run virtual assemblies via Zoom. Teachers will share the link to the assemblies on Tapestry or Showbie. Monday's assembly, which will include birthdays, will be at 10.45am. Celebration Assembly will take place on Friday at 2.45pm. Parents are welcome to join.

VIPs

VIPs will be postponed until school returns. We endeavour that all children will still get a chance to be a VIP, but this may mean that we need to increase the number of VIPs per week to ensure all children have the opportunity.

School Places

We are offering limited places for vulnerable pupils and children of Critical Workers. We ask that parents and carers make themselves familiar with the tiered criteria and ranking system we have put in place before requesting a place in school for their child/ren. This can be found at: <https://www.st-piusx.cumbria.sch.uk/covid-19/partial-opening-of-school-january-2021>. We will assess every enquiry against our strict criteria. Parents and carers of vulnerable pupils do not need to complete the form; school will contact families directly. A link to a new form will be released every Thursday morning on Class Dojo and the deadline for completion is 12noon the following Wednesday.

The school will operate in year group bubbles, with staff from that bubble delivering and supporting remote learning, as well as supporting vulnerable pupils and children of critical workers in class. To help reduce the risk to staff and other pupils, we have decided to **limit the number to ten pupils per year group**. In addition, the staff and governors have agreed to **further limit the number in Early Years to six pupils**, due to the increased difficulty to social distance.

I must reiterate, **where possible your child must stay at home**. School places are only available for those that have no other option. If your child is allocated a place at school, we ask that families adhere to Government guidelines outside of school. If we are presented with any evidence of any family breaking the rules, the child's place will be withdrawn.

School Trips and Visits

The Year 5 Coniston Water Park, due to take place in February, has been postponed to the Summer term. The London trip in the summer term is still going ahead as planned at this stage. No other school trips or visits will be organised until we know they are guaranteed to go ahead.

Extended Schools

Breakfast Club and After School Club will not take run until school reopens fully.

Bus

The bus will not be operating until school reopens fully, except for children identified as vulnerable according to the government's criteria.

Homework

Homework will not be set during lockdown, except for Times Tables Rock Stars, Numbots and Spag.com.

Reading

We are currently looking into an online reading scheme to use during lockdown. Physical books will not be sent home until school reopens fully.

Newsletters

Weekly newsletters will recommence once school returns. There is a lot of information being shared at the moment and we are trying to reduce the amount of things sent out, where possible.

I hope you find this information useful. Once again, thank you for your continued support.

Kind regards,

Mr Kevin McGoldrick
Headteacher