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## **November 2020 Newsletter**

Dear Parents, Carers and Friends of St Mary's,

At the start of another half term I'd like to personally thank you for the support you have shown over the past few weeks. Thank you for sticking to the allocated drop off and pick up times; wearing face masks and keeping visits to the school office to a minimum. We would ask you to continue being vigilant for the safety of the whole school community. I'd also like to thank those parents who have sent us emails congratulating us on the way we have handled bringing the children back, and the safety measures we have put in place. Please be assured we are acting upon all DFE guidance and will adapt as we need to.

You will know that we have had to shut 2 bubbles last half term. Acting quickly meant that the virus did not spread. Thank you for your cooperation with this too. Lessons did continue for those year groups, using Teams, and staff, parents and children coped remarkably well.

### **Remembrance**

It is hugely important that children have an age appropriate understanding of the sacrifice people made during the war. This year every year group has researched local men who sadly gave their lives for our country. Each child has been asked to research and remember someone with a name similar to theirs. We have made a very moving video which we would love to share with you. Every child has contributed to this. It can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7LDXCVaqAuk>

### **Good News for the Playground**

This week a trim trail is being installed on the key stage 1 playground. When this is complete, we hope to be able to put markings onto the ground and give our children lots of things to play with outside.

A strange request ..... We are designing a memorial garden for these unprecedented times. We want to move something in school but need the assistance of a Hiab crane lift if anyone has one or knows of someone who can help us out.

### **Remote Learning**

We have already facilitated 2 classes accessing lock down remote learning. We are now in a position to be able to offer remote learning to any child who has to self-isolate. Each week classes will upload work to Microsoft Teams so work will be ready for any period of isolation. If you struggle to access please let us know. We can also help out by loaning you a laptop should your child need to self-isolate.

## **Staff News**

We are delighted to tell you that we have appointed another member of staff. Mr Cruise will start with us soon, working to help children who need a boost. You may have heard about catch up funding from the DFE – we are using ours to booster reading across the curriculum. Mrs McCauley and Mrs Haslam will both be working with groups of children to accelerate learning.

Other news is that Mrs Leather – one of our longstanding Mid-Day Assistants – has taken up a position in the kitchen. Her last day with the children will be 13<sup>th</sup> December. Her MDA position is vacant – please talk with Mrs Jackson if you know of anyone who is interested.

## **Nursery**

### **Please tell everyone that we have lots of places free – children can start immediately**

Everyone knows how superb our Nursery is ..... but we have lots of spaces. Please spread the word that we have capacity to take more children and are keen to hear from anyone that is looking for a Nursery space. We are now able to take children straight after their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday rather than waiting for a term to start.

## **Car Park**

This is a staff car park, so please do not use it. This is for the health and safety of all our children.

## **Christmas**

We are currently looking at how we can make this a special time for our children. There are, of course, things we usually do that we will be unable to do and we are going to reassess as future guidance is released.

We have agreed the following

- Friday 11<sup>th</sup> December will be Christmas Jumper Day
- Children will be able to give Christmas cards: MUST be in school by 4th Dec to be given out the following week
- **Calendars**

This is a new venture for us and one we are quite excited about. In place of our usual raffle, we will be selling calendars. Each child's will be different as it will consist of a few photos of themselves, laminated and displayed in a lovely way. Each calendar will need to be ordered and will cost £1.50 each. They are a great idea for little gifts and you can order as many as you like. The final date for ordering will be Friday 4<sup>th</sup> December and they orders will be sent out on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> December so you will have enough time to post them off as gifts.

A separate order form will be sent home.

## **COVID-19**

Message from LA - More evidence has emerged that shows there is a very low risk of children becoming very unwell from COVID-19, even for children with existing health conditions. Most children originally identified as clinically extremely vulnerable no longer need to follow this advice. Speak to your GP or specialist clinician, if you have not already done so, to understand whether your child should still be classed as clinically extremely vulnerable.

Those children whose doctors have confirmed they are still clinically extremely vulnerable are advised not to attend school while this advice is in place. Your school will make appropriate arrangements for you to be able to continue your education at home. Children who live with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable, but who are not clinically extremely vulnerable themselves, should still attend school.

## **Children in Need**

We will allow children to come to school in their own clothes, for a £1 donation on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> November.