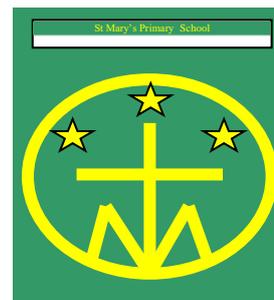


St Mary's Primary School

Term 3 Newsletter



January 2021

Dear Parents

I hope you and your families are keeping safe and well. We are really missing the children and wish that things were back to normal again.

You will see from the media reports that home schooling is likely to go on at least until the middle of February. I would like to thank you for the support and positive feedback we have received during our phone calls – that really means a lot to us.

Hub Places

Over the past few weeks, we have seen a steady increase in applications for the school hub, which involves more staff having to attend school and is making social distancing more difficult.

I would like to remind all keyworkers that the hub is for emergency childcare and should only be used if there is no other possible alternative. If you work shifts and are at home on any given day, please do not send your child into the hub. It is much safer for everyone if you keep your child at home whenever possible.

We will be sending out a form each week asking key workers to let us know which days they require critical childcare for the following week. That way, we can ensure that we are not increasing risks by having more staff or children in the building than is strictly necessary.

Feedback

As you know, many of our teachers are working from home like yourselves, and are trying to manage caring responsibilities, take their turn in the school hub and home school their own children. I can already see the added pressure this is putting on their physical and emotional wellbeing.

The feedback that I have received from teachers is that planning remote learning packs, managing Teams and giving feedback on children's work is taking much longer than it would if they were in school, and I am concerned that this will

result in them becoming over-stressed and unable to work at all. I am also mindful that teachers have a working time agreement, and should not be working more than their contractual hours.

In order to support our teachers through this difficult time, I would ask you not to expect feedback on every piece of work your child uploads. That is not to say that the teachers will never provide individual feedback, but there may be times when this is just not possible.

We know that the best feedback the children can receive is through talking to the teacher as they are completing work, however, this is not possible at the moment. By looking at the children's completed work, even without giving individual feedback on every single thing, the teachers can see how well they have achieved the success criteria and this allows them to either revise the outcome or move on to the next part of the planner.

Communication

I would like to remind you that all communication from parents must go through the school office and should not be sent directly to the teacher's Glow email address.

Laudato Si Programme

Over the coming weeks you will see that the children are being asked to undertake activities related to Laudato Si.

In his (encyclical) letter to the Catholic Community, Pope Francis asked us to love God, look after each other and protect the world. He told us about the challenges we are facing and asked us to make things better.

Pope Francis also said that education and schools are more than about information: they are about forming good habits. He reminded us that we have a duty to care for creation through little daily actions, and said it is wonderful how education can bring about real and lasting changes to our world.

Before Christmas, our staff and children pledged to make a CHANGE FOR GOOD in our school, at home, in our parish and within our local community. Although there are limitations to what we can do at present, I hope you will be able to join with our school community as we embark on this journey of learning, praying and acting for the good of others.

P4 and P7 Sacraments

In order to ensure social distancing, First Confessions will take place over 4 evenings:

Monday 15th March

Wednesday 17th March

Monday 22nd March

Wednesday 24th March

We have still to confirm the dates for First Holy Communion and Confirmation but I will let you know as soon as possible.

Finally, if you need anything, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Guthrie