

St Mary's News

Welcome back everybody!!

It has been lovely to see and hear everyone back in school this week. I know that everyone has been working hard to settle back in and get to grips with the routine of a school day. Your children will be really tired and some will be emotional. It is quite overwhelming to go from a small family group to a class of 30 and a school playground of around a 100. The noise alone can be a force to be reckoned with. We understand that children will need time to settle back into friendship groups, they have had 9 weeks or so without really having to share, take turns, think of others before speaking etc. They will need to build their resilience back up to deal with friendship conflicts, but I am confident they will do this quickly.

Lockdown learning

We have analysed seesaw and tapestry accounts and returned paper packs and found that we had 80% of children across school access learning throughout lockdown which is fantastic. We are going to give everyone time to settle in before we do a quick assessment before Easter to see what fall back there has been in reading and maths. We will then look at what catch up can be started.

Virtue

Our Virtue for this half term is Charity. We are having a non-uniform day next Friday (19th) with all proceeds going to Comic Relief. Suggested donation is £1. Please do not send red noses into school on that day.

Running track

A massive thank you to all those families who pay £4 voluntary contributions each month. From this funding along with the Sports Premium we have been able to have a running track installed during Lockdown. It was finished just in time for everyone coming back to school. We have noticed several children complaining of aching muscles! Each class are using the track during the day to build up stamina and fitness after this 9 weeks of lockdown.

We are hoping to keep a tally of how far we are all walking to show where in the world we have walked to. If you haven't already signed up for the £4 per month contribution just ask at the office for details.

Free School Meal Vouchers

These have now stopped as all children are back in school, however Kirklees have guaranteed they will provide vouchers over the Easter holiday (2 weeks). Becky is in the process of ordering the vouchers for our eligible families.

If your circumstances have changed due to the lockdown and/or furlough please check if you might be eligible at www.kirklees.gov.uk/schoolmeals or ring 01484 221928

Please note if you are no longer eligible it is your responsibility to cancel your account, we cannot do it for you.

PE and Uniform

As the current restrictions are still ongoing, we have amended our uniform for the short term. Our changing room is far too small to accommodate a group of 15 children to get changed in and be as safe as possible. Classes 8-11 are now permitted to come to school in their PE kit on their PE days. Please make sure their kit is appropriate for outdoor PE and trainers are included. I am aware that uniform shops are still closed and the supermarkets are low in stock of popular sizes so any joggers and sweatshirt (plain if possible) are ok for now.

Also ventilation is still a priority in our list of measures to prevent the spread of the virus within the classroom and school community. You may have noticed more publicity for this measure on the news and coronavirus updates. It does mean school is colder than usual so children are allowed to wear their coats in class and/or wear extra layers such as an extra t-shirt or sweatshirt.

Home testing kits

Obviously despite ongoing restrictions people still have to go out to work or shop so there is still the risk of transmission of the virus. Schools reopening may (or not) cause a rise in local cases too. If as a household, you would like to be involved in home testing you can collect a kit from Dewsbury Railway station car park, Ravensthorpe neighbourhood Housing Car park, Queens Street or Leeds Road Playing fields Earlsheaton. You do not need to book and you can collect 2 packs of home test kits at a time. Each pack contains 7 tests and anyone 18 or over can collect the tests. Alternatively, you can order them to be delivered to your home address. These are the same kits staff are using twice a week too. If anyone does test positive the whole household isolates until a lab test is completed and those results come back.

Go to Kirklees Council website and search for testing kits and you will find all the links and information you need.

Positive cases

Thank you to the families who have informed us of a case within their household that was confirmed before we came back to school.

We have been asked to keep informing Kirklees and Public Health England so they can monitor any hotspots or clusters.

Nursery places

Our nursery numbers are getting lower and lower each school year. There is a real concern that it does not remain viable and we really don't want it to close. We have a very small waiting list for September so please contact school or go on the website for SIF2020 form to register your interest for nursery. Any child who is 3 between 1st September 2020 and August 31st 2021 can be accepted (as long as toilet trained) for September. Applications for younger children can be made now so at least we can see what numbers might be likely in the next couple of years.

Milk

Any payments made for this term have been carried over for Summer term (starting April 12th) but still time for anyone else to pay through parent pay.

MASSSES for St Mary's Holy Week and Easter Sunday

This is an online booking service-please go to www.stmarybatley.co.uk to book a place for Masses during Holy Week, the Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday. Alternatively Masses are now live streamed, you just need to go on the above website, click live stream and subscribe (free) to the youtube link.