

St Aidan's Catholic Primary School
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Headteacher: Mr M Boland

26th January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

COVID 19 Update from School

We thought it might be useful to give you a quick update on the latest news from school with regard to COVID 19.

School Remains Open

School has remained open to all children of Key Workers and those who may be identified as vulnerable.

Please find the Government advice on this below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>.

At St Aidan's we have also invited all children who currently have a place, to attend the Nursery, again following Government advice.

Teachers are providing remote learning for their classes and KS2 children have been getting used to using Microsoft Teams to support their learning. Most of the teachers are working from home whilst many of the Teaching Assistants and some teachers work to support children in school each day. Thank you to all staff who are on site and the School Office who organise the children in school daily as well as doing their own jobs. I am extremely grateful to them all for their dedication and creativity while maintaining a St Aidan's family despite the barriers we face.

Support for Families

We have been able to provide Food Parcels for many families recently. Kitchen staff helped to make them up and Mr. Williams very kindly helped to deliver to families who found it difficult to collect them from school. We have now moved over to vouchers again which have been organised by the School Office. If you have any problems accessing your voucher, please contact the office who will be happy to provide you with assistance.

We have been able to support many families with laptops who may have otherwise found remote learning very difficult. The provision of these machines has been very welcome from the Department for Education. A further delivery of 4G wireless dongles is expected shortly. Again, thank you to Mr. Williams and all the teachers for quickly identifying who needed support and mobilising the laptops out to families very quickly.

Mrs. Magill has been providing extra support for children with additional needs giving advice to parents and teachers about how best to support their needs in these challenging times. Those with the greatest need have been invited to come into school so that we can support them directly.

The teachers have been providing lots of well-planned activities to try and make the day as 'normal' as we can, and I know this takes a lot of preparation. I also know that they ring families to check on wellbeing and that the children love to hear directly from their teachers.

Testing

We have access to a 'fast lane' at the Leisure Centre and other centres across the Local Authority to make sure that we can test the adults in school at least once a week. Our staff have been very good at engaging with this so far.

From this week, we have the 'quick version' of the tests (Lateral Flow Tests) in school. This means that staff can test at home twice a week to quickly identify any outbreak in school. We have had some training on this and will be starting the programme this week. **This test is for staff only.** High schools will be working towards testing staff and pupils.

Return to school

There is no clear news at this point and the politicians are pointing to the science to give us a clear picture of when to reopen. Given increasing vaccinations, wider testing and hopefully reducing rates of infection, I am trying to be optimistic about a full return sooner rather than later. I will keep you informed of any changes as they happen.

I will take this opportunity to thank you for your support; your determination to keep children safe at home; your commitment to supporting remote learning and providing a good example of what resilience looks like to your children in these difficult times.

If we can help you in any way please contact us through:-
helpathome@staidanscatholicprimary.com

Yours faithfully

M Boland (Mr)
Headteacher