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St Mary's

Church of England Primary School

Newsletter No. 8 2nd December 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

We hope you are all well. Our newsletter is in two parts this week. Please read each part carefully as it includes essential information.

Part 1

Covid-19 Update:

You will know that we have had some Covid-19 cases throughout the school during the last 10-day period. We have been working closely with Public Health during this time, and we have reviewed the current situation with them this week.

Public Health have advised that we maintain the additional protective measures **until the end of term**. We will need to therefore continue with the following:

- Daily lateral flow testing which should be done with the children every morning **before school**. You can [collect free testing kits in various locations](#) or you can get [free lateral flow test kits sent to your home](#). There is no need to send results of lateral flow tests to the office email; we are trusting parents and carers to fulfil this responsibility. Please note that individuals that have tested positive for Covid-19 should not use lateral flow tests or PCR testing for 90 days after their positive diagnosis.
- All collective worship will remain virtual and class based
- Lunchtimes will continue to be separate so the children will not share a lunchtime with another class in the hall. Christmas lunch will still go ahead but in class bubbles only.
- Children will need to continue to arrive and leave **at the time for their class**. We are still unable to have siblings arriving at the same time.
- Please arrive on time to drop off/collect your child; please don't arrive early as this leads to parents congregating on the pavements outside school.
- Reception parents and carers to continue to drop off/pick up via the Littlegrove entrance.

Wider measures:

- Breakfast club will continue to operate, please only use this facility if it is absolutely necessary.
- After school clubs cannot resume this term as they all involve children mixing across bubbles. We apologise for any disappointment this may cause and we will notify external providers that we have had to suspend clubs.

- Please continue to think carefully about how your child mixes outside of school. We ask that you consider any out of school activities including parties and playdates, in order to minimise the spread of Covid.

While we are working in class bubbles, we are unable to mix staff to cover in class as a result of staff absence. We wrote to you last week to re-iterate this, as it continues to pose a significant challenge in school. We appreciate that this is a worrying time and that you may be anxious about your child being in school. Please be assured that we are doing everything we can in school to reduce risks as much as possible. Since introducing the additional measures, we have not seen the same levels of increasing cases as we did over 10 days ago.

We are hoping that when school reopens in January that we will be able to resume the usual arrangements. We will write to parents and carers again with further confirmation.



Part 2

Dear Parents & Carers

You will have seen the news yesterday that Mrs Adams will be retiring from the school after an amazing 26 years of service. I wanted to express my gratitude to Mel on behalf of the whole Governing Body for her unstinting service to the school, and the huge contribution she has made to it over the years. Current public health conditions do not allow us to mark the occasion at the moment, but rest assured, we will be celebrating her achievements properly at some point in the months to come. We are all very much looking forward to working with Mrs Constantinou as she moves from the co-Headship to the substantive Headship, and to taking the school forward together on the next stage of its journey.

Stephen Edwards
Chair of Governors

Other news and updates from Mrs Constantinou:

You will know from her letter yesterday that Mrs Adams will sadly be retiring from St. Mary's at the end of this term after an incredible 26 years of service to the school and wider community.

Mel will be hugely missed by colleagues, children and families; she had influenced the lives of so many here at St. Mary's.

It's not quite goodbye just yet however, as Mel will continue to work reduced hours to support me as I take on additional responsibilities related to Special Educational Needs Leadership until the summer.

Whilst it will be impossible to express our gratitude to Mel for all that she has done, I'm sure you will join me, the staff and governor colleagues in wanting to celebrate Mel's significant contribution to the school. We will mark Mel's time at St. Mary's later in the school year when there are hopefully less restrictions on what's possible.

Other staffing updates:

Following the news earlier this term that Mrs Lawrence will be leaving St Mary's at Christmas, we are pleased to announce that Miss Goringe will be taking on the role of Y1 teacher. Some of you may know Miss Goringe who is our SENCO and has been in Y2 to cover Mrs Oliver's maternity leave.

As Miss Goringe will be class based with Y1 from January, she will be unable to continue in the SENCO role for the remainder of this academic year. For that reason, I will be taking on the SENCO role alongside my headship responsibilities from January.

Filming in School:

Given the current situation in school, and the need to minimise mixing, we really sorry that we are unable to have live audiences for our Christmas nativities this year. Please complete the class specific, online form sent by text message yesterday. We need all replies by Monday 6th December please.

We are hoping to film our Infant Nativity 'Hey Ewe' and our Junior Christmas production 'Don't Be Afraid' in the final week of term.

We realise that it's disappointing not to be able to watch the shows in person, but this way, there's the added benefit of being able to watch the recordings endlessly in the comfort of your own home!

The Children's Society:

Every year, at Christmas, we support the work of the charity [The Children's Society](#). Right now, there are children living through abuse, exploitation and neglect. For them, childhood is a daily battle, with nowhere to turn. The Children's Society, they have enabled an opportunity for virtual gifting this Christmas.

This campaign is called 'Give Hope'. By donating a gift, you will be giving the gift of hope to a child who's feeling scared and isolated during this Christmas. Here are just a few of the gifts that can be purchased for children in need.

There is also an option to donate any monetary amount too. Click [here](#) to find out more about 'Give Hope'.



- 1 Choose a meaningful gift.
- 2 Pay at the checkout.
- 3 Print your gift certificate if you'd like to give your donation as a present.

Christmas Jumper Day:

On Friday 10 December, we will be taking part in Save the Children's Christmas Jumper Day. On this day, **the children should come in school uniform and wear their Christmas jumper in addition to their usual uniform or PE kit** (for classes that have coached PE on that day).

We're asking families to donate £1 (or however much they can give), to support children in the UK and around the world. By taking part we'll be helping kids who don't have the basics they need to survive – like food, school or medicine – to start seeing the magic in the world again.

There's no need to buy a new jumper – you can get crafty at home there will also be decorating templates available on the Christmas Jumper Day Gameplan at www.christmasjumperday.org

To make donating easier and safer this year we've set up our own Just Giving page. You can donate directly here: <https://christmas.savethechildren.org.uk/fundraising/cid210003194>

Please note, JustGiving only accepts a minimum donation of £1. Therefore, if your donation is less than £1 you can:



- Donate via Save the Children's website at www.christmasjumperday.org
- Please use our school's reference number **cjd210003194** on any donation made. The donation form will be live closer to the big day!

Books in school:

Just a reminder that our Amazon Wish List can be accessed [here](#). The link to our wish list at the Children's Book Shop in Muswell Hill can be found here: <https://www.childrensbookshoplondon.com/wishlists>.

If your child has a birthday coming up, donating a book might be a lovely way to celebrate!

Thank you to the Harris family for book donations over the last few weeks.

These books are currently winging their way to classroom library shelves.



Dates for your diary:

- 10.12.21 – Christmas Jumper Day
- 15.12.21 – Christmas Lunch in Class Bubbles
- 16.12.21 – Class Christmas Parties (more information to follow)
- 17.12.21 – Christingle Service with Y6 (which we will record)
- 17.12.21 – Final day of term – breaking up for Christmas



From all of us at St Mary's primary school, stay safe, stay well and our love and prayers be with you as always.

**Maria Constantinou and Mel Adams
Headteachers**

