

DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

Dear Parents and Carers

Just one day until the end of the term and what a term it has been! But it looks as if we might make it without the closure of a class bubble (I hope that is not tempting fate!). We have just undertaken our fifth risk assessment review and there will be further new measures effective from the beginning of the spring term. We constantly review our procedures in light of local and national developments and make changes when thought helpful to mitigate the risk of Covid-19 transmission in school. Changes to practice and school expectations of parents and carers will be fully explained at the start of term but in the meantime please note the following:

- Mrs. Geldart and Mrs. Kissos-Boast will no longer work across bubbles for as long as Covid remains prevalent in the community. Mrs. Geldart will provide classroom support for Y1 and Mrs. Kissos-Boast will continue to teach swimming to all classes.
- To ensure that our school remains Covid secure the swimming timetable will be very different in the spring and summer terms. Classes will have daily consecutive swimming lessons; for example, swimming will recommence on the 4th January 2021 for Y2. Y2 pupils will have 10 consecutive daily lessons during the first fortnight of the term. Mrs Kissos-Boast will then not work for the following 9-10 days allowing her to 'isolate' (not cross into another bubble) before teaching another year group for 10 consecutive days. This process will continue until the end of the summer term with swimming reintroduced for nursery, reception and Y1 children who, thus far, have not had swimming lessons because of their young age and swimming competency.

- Swimming lessons will be delivered to smaller groups of 7-8 children and lessons will be a little longer than usual to make up for the fact that each class will have fewer lessons than usual for the remainder of the school year. Smaller swimming groups, slightly longer lessons and lessons which group children of similar swimming ability will enhance the swimming experience and enable children to progress at a good rate. I consider this a much better arrangement for every class rather than a weekly swim which increases the possibility of cross infection. It is also far better than no swimming at all, which was under consideration at one point.
- I appreciate that it does mean that you will need to wash/rinse and then dry swimming costumes and towels daily for 10 school days and your support and patience with this is appreciated.

Schools remain responsible for collating and reporting Covid cases in the first six days of the Christmas holiday. I will be checking Teachers2Parents text messages daily and I ask that should your household be affected by Covid from the 19th – 24th December that you report this to me via our school texting system. Your compliance with this is required by the L.A. and central government.



Staffing: As mentioned in my November newsletter, Mrs. Spiteri and Mrs. Pacey retire tomorrow after many years of working at St. John's. We will all miss them greatly! Thank you for the kind messages you have sent them and the gifts. I know they have been very touched by your thoughtfulness and that you join me in wishing them both the happiest and healthiest retirement. Money donations from you will be included in the staff gifts and your names will be known to them both.

As sad as we are to see Mrs. Spiteri and Mrs. Pacey leave, I am very pleased to announce their replacements. From January 2021 the school office will be run by Mrs. Anita Isaacs and Mrs. Angela Kidd. We look forward to welcoming them both to our school community.



School Christmas Nativities: No matter what, nothing will stop a school Nativity! And we have three for you to enjoy! Each key stage Nativity will be released and available to view from 5 pm today, Thursday 17th December on google classroom. Staff have produced EYFS, KS1 and KS2 Nativities involving all of the children. Our shows this year are inevitably different to normal but that only adds to the excitement and enjoyment. Please login to your children's classrooms for some festive cheer; I promise that you will not be disappointed.

My thanks to all the children for their enthusiastic performances and to all the staff for their hard work and fabulous creativity. Everyone has worked so very hard this term to ensure that children enjoy a purposeful and rewarding school experience despite the obstacles in our path and I am, like you I am sure, so very grateful to each one of them for their dedication and commitment to the children and the school.

I also extend my gratitude to members of our school PTFA who work tirelessly and without fuss behind the scenes in the interest of the school and specifically for the benefit of every child in the school. Concerned that the children would not be able to enjoy Christmas at school in the usual way and wanting no child to miss out or be disadvantaged, they have arranged gift stalls for the children to buy presents for their parents, organised a socially distanced Santa's Grotto with an experienced Santa and gifts for EVERY child (who would want a child to miss out on a gift from Santa....whatever the reason?). They have produced a wonderful children's cookbook and a cookie pack; they have decorated the school hall to make it festive for the children (what a shame you were not there to see the children's faces light up when they came in that first morning!) and produced the most wonderful Christmas welcome at the entrance to the school with the Festive arch and wreaths. The PTFA committee and all those who help them, often after midnight when there are approximately 230 presents to wrap, are the unsung heroes of our school. I am incredibly grateful to each of them and I am sure that you are too. My special thanks to the following (apologies if I have inadvertently left someone out) – Anna Michael, Kim and Ben Pallas, Anna Marie and Donie Flanagan, Lisa Coletta, Jess Atkins, Jess Groves, Claire

Duggan and Hannah Prior. Together you have helped to make Christmas in school special.



Please don't forget that **our church Carol Service takes place this Sunday 20th December at 6 pm** and the **Crib Service on Christmas Eve at 5 pm**. Everyone is welcome so please join by Zoom if you can. Zoom ID 811 8941 4709; password: worship

Please remember that school closure is brought forward by an hour for each class tomorrow with the first children departing at 2 pm. School resumes on Monday 4th January 2021.

I wish you all a very happy Christmas and a healthy New Year.

Graham Gunn

Head Teacher