

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2020

## Headteacher Newsletter

Dear Parents

A warm welcome back to all our families. I hope you all had a wonderful half term break and managed to get some rest and relaxation as a family. The recent announcement by the Prime Minister regarding the second national lockdown I know will have created some unrest in our community and I felt it important to write to you all to address this issue and some of the other elements of school life which need to be highlighted.

### **Lockdown**

As it currently stands schools will be remaining open during the lockdown period. This will ensure that our children can continue with the social and academic recovery they have made since returning to school in September. Rest assured we will do all we can to continue this progress and support the children in our care. We are acutely aware that the long term impact of the pandemic on the children mental health and wellbeing is still to be seen, and that a second lockdown will undoubtedly add to the anxiety that some children will be feeling. We will be working with all children to address issues and develop strategies to cope during this difficult time.

Where children have to stay at home school will continue to provide online learning via Seesaw which will match the learning which would take place in class. As the year progresses, we will be reviewing and refining our remote provision to ensure we are delivering the highest possible provision.

### **Onsite Procedures**

Onsite arrangements will continue as they have through the first half of the Autumn Term. I would ask that social distancing is maintained whilst queuing to drop off or collect your child, and I would highly recommend adults wear a mask in the line where possible. I would also ask that parents do not congregate in groups once they have dropped off or collected. It will also be a requirement that if you are entering the school building for any reason that a mask be worn whilst in the building.

### **Uniform**

As highlighted in my previous correspondences, all children should now be in 'Winter Uniform'. This means that all children should be in a shirt and tie and that polo shirts **must not** be worn. I have conducted a full uniform check today and unfortunately there are still children being sent to school in the incorrect uniform.

All pupils must now be sent to school in the correct uniform items. As of Monday 9th November, if a child attends school in the incorrect uniform parents will be called to collect children to amend their attire, or bring to the school the appropriate clothing. This is further extension of the notification period to allow families to order the correct uniform where required.

The offer of support in regards to uniform is still open to anyone who requires it. As I stated in both my September and October newsletters uniform items can be provided where necessary without question. I would ask that where required a message which simply contains the items required be given to me and these can be sourced and delivered privately without any further conversation being needed.

I would like to thank those families who do ensure that their children are in school uniform each day and are keen to demonstrate to their children the importance of education by following school policy. Your contribution is very much valued.

### **Boys – Winter**

Bottle green v neck jumper with school badge  
White shirt  
School tie  
Grey trousers  
Black shoes

### **Girls – Winter**

Bottle green cardigan or v neck jumper with badge  
White shirt  
School tie  
Grey skirt, grey pinafore or trousers  
Flat black shoes

### **School Events**

As a school we are keen to try and keep as many of our usual events in place as possible, and although not all events can be delivered during the current restrictions, we are attempting to adapt where possible. School photographs will still take place, as will the flu vaccination programme. Our traditional Nativity production will not take place in the usual way, but Infant teachers are working hard to produce an adapted version for families. Christmas parties will also go ahead but these will be organised in year group bubbles rather than Key Stages.

### **Mental Health and Wellbeing**

As previously stated, Mental health and wellbeing is an important part of St Ambrose Barlow Catholic Primary School. As part of our ongoing commitment to supporting the children in our care, all staff have recently been training in the ROAR response to mental health in Primary Schools and we have, as a school, adopted this approach in classes. As always, we believe that working in partnership with parents and carers is the best way to support our children.

For this reason, we are delighted to invite you to a parents' session to explain the ROAR response and the wellbeing work we are doing in school. The session will cover how we react to stressful situations, using mindfulness in daily life and how you can use the Roar response to support your children at home. The session will be delivered via Zoom to allow for questions and discussions and will take approximately an hour. This will be delivered by Mrs Kearns, who is our school wellbeing lead and mental health first aider.

The session will take place on **Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> November** at **1.30pm**. If you would like to take part, please contact school and we will send you the Zoom invitation.

### **Christmas Cards & Tea Towels**

Our incredible PTA have organised with the amazing individuals in the office to ensure that these school staples go ahead this year. Families should have received all the relevant information needed regarding the new arrangements for ordering these items and the children will soon be beginning their designs in class.

### **Reindeer Visit**

Last year we were lucky enough to be visited by Santa's very own reindeer thanks to our hardworking PTA and the Northwest Reindeer Hire. We have again managed to liaise with

Father Christmas to have a visit from his Sleigh Team and we are all super excited! They will be visiting school on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> November.

### **Christmas Dinner**

Our school Christmas Dinner will take place on **Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> December**. If your child does not normally have a school dinner please ensure you book on for this dinner by **Friday 4<sup>th</sup> December** so that our kitchen staff know numbers for catering purposes.

### **Open Day**

Traditionally in the second half of the Autumn Term school organises an open day event for parent who are thinking about applying for a place at our school for their child for the following September. This is always such a wonderful opportunity to meet families and show case all of the wonderful work which takes place across the different year groups. Unfortunately due to the restrictions in place across school the usual practice will not be possible.

As an alternative this year we are in the process of planning a socially distanced information event. This would take place in the school hall and consist of the usual information giving and presentation but without the physical tour of the classes. We are being optimistic that the current national lockdown will be over by the beginning of December, so the proposed dates would take place post lockdown if possible.

Set slots would spread out over a two day period so as to accommodate possible numbers. These sessions would need to be socially distanced, follow strict guidelines, and be subject to change depending on the national restrictions in place at the time.

Alternative dates in early January are being discussed in case it is not possible to for the sessions in December to take place. Strict regulation of numbers would be crucial, so booking places for the event would be essential.

This is a very difficult time for everyone, and as you might imagine trying to arrange events like this are a challenge. There are many different elements which needs to be addressed, and so many variable components to manage. We will as always endeavour to deliver the best option we possibly can to help to support normal practice.

### **Dates for the Diary**

18<sup>th</sup> November Flu Vaccinations  
26<sup>th</sup> November School Photographs  
20<sup>th</sup> December Final Day of Advent Term

### **Final Thought**

On behalf of the whole school team may I wish every family the very best as we move into this second lockdown. As always, we are here to support one another through these challenges, and with care, kindness and dedication we will get through this period together. We continue to keep each of families in our prayers, and with the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the light of Christ in our hearts, I know we will come out the other side of this as a school family, united and stronger.

God bless each and every one, stay safe and be kind to yourselves.

Mr Doherty  
Headteacher