



# St. Teresa's Catholic Primary School Newsletter Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2020

## *Little Flowers Growing and Giving Glory to God*

### **Children in school this week**

For the final week in school of this academic year, we have expected up to twelve children in Reception, up to fourteen children in Year 1 and up to twenty-two children in Year 6. There are fifteen children of key workers/vulnerable children that we expected to be in the 'Alpha' key workers/vulnerable bubble and fifteen children in the 'Bravo' key workers' children/Vulnerable children bubble on any given day.

On Monday, there were fifty-seven children in school. On Tuesday, there were sixty-one children in. On Wednesday, there were sixty-two children in. Yesterday, there were sixty-seven children in. Today, there are twenty-nine key workers children/vulnerable children in school.

Thank you to the staff, parents/carers, and children who have been in school from 23<sup>rd</sup> March onwards working to maintain some level of normality at these times and striving to keep each other safe.

### **Covid-19 Parents/Carers Survey**

With this newsletter is a parents/carers survey that you are asked to complete and return to school. This year, due to the circumstances of the last few months, the survey questions reflect the school's response to the Covid-19 crisis. Please do complete this survey and return it to school.

### **Letter from Councillor Ian Ward, Leader of Birmingham City Council**

Also with this newsletter is a letter from the leader of Birmingham City Council regarding the opening of schools in September.

### **Free School Meal Vouchers and Codes**

The parents/carers of children entitled to free school meals who have requested the sixteen-digit voucher code to be forwarded to them should have received the codes for the week commencing 13<sup>th</sup> July. The codes for the six weeks of the Summer holidays are to be released on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July.

The codes for those parents/carers who have requested that the vouchers be forwarded to them for this week and for the six weeks of the summer holidays were posted, delivered or handed to parents/carers earlier this week.

If parents/carers of any children are having hardship, particularly getting food, please contact the school and we will signpost you to groups that may be able to help you. We have been able to source food parcels and other support for families where we aware of any need and will continue to try to do so throughout the summer.

### **Annual School Reports**

The children's annual school reports were forwarded electronically to parents and carers at the end of last week and the start of this week. Please contact school if you have not received your child's annual school report.

### **The start of the new academic year**

The expectation is that all children will be returning at the start of the academic year which, for children returning in Year 1 to Year 6, is on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September.

The start and end times for the school day will be a time period rather than one set time. We are terming this a 'soft start' and 'soft end' to the school day. Children, accompanied by an adult, if that is the norm for your child, can come onto the school site from 8.45 a.m. to 9.15 a.m. and go on a directed route into class via the playgrounds. The adults can then leave the school site on a directed route and are asked not to congregate at exit to the school. The soft end to the day, when parents/carers can collect is to be from 3.00 p.m. to 3.30 p.m.

The 'soft start' and 'soft end' to the school day will be monitored to ensure the safety of all. If this is not felt to be the safest option there may have to be specific times allocated to a year group to ensure that the start and end of the day do not become overwhelming. This would not be ideal as it creates issues for parents/carers who have more than one child at school. It is in everybody's interest that the 'soft start' and 'soft close' work effectively.

I would advise parents/carers to consider when in the half hour opening and closing of the school is likely to be less busy, as it is likely that during the half an hour allocated if it is busy that parents and children will have to queue to come into or leave school.

Children who will be in Years 1 to Year 6 at the start of the new academic year to be in school from Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September. The Reception class, for either the morning or the afternoon, are to be in school from Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September.

We are asking that children are to wear school uniform when they return to school in September.

The new Reception class have not been able to come into school as part of their induction process so the start of their year will be different to usual. Individual Reception children and a parent/carer will come into school to meet with the Reception staff to begin the process of starting with us at St. Teresa's School.

Whilst the intention is for school to be as normal as possible there is guidance that has to be followed, this includes how classrooms are set up with children facing, where possible, in the same direction. It is also expected that bubbles of up to thirty children i.e. classes, do not mix. This will mean that at the start of term we are not able to provide a Breakfast Club or after school activities.

Breaktimes and dinner times will be staggered and hand washing and cleaning regimes will continue.

### Catholic Life

The Wednesday Word for each weekend up to our return to school in September is available on the 'Home' page of the school website.



### Resilience Calendar for July

Action for Happiness have created a calendar which may be of use to families. The calendar gives prompts and ideas which are useful for children and adults to support well-being. You can download a pdf copy at <https://www.actionforhappiness.org/jump-back-july>

### Kenelm Youth Trust

As mentioned last week, both Alton Castle and the Soli Centre for Youth Ministry, are offering action-packed, outdoor fun family holidays, where you get to stay in the beautiful 19th century Pugin designed castle, or Soli, a Retreat/Conference centre which has been renovated to a very high standard and all bedrooms are en-suite. Surrounded by the beauty of the Churnet Valley, riddled with an historic past, a stay at the Castle or its grounds is a unique experience.

All of the stays are COVID-19 secure. Families can hire a floor of the castle all to themselves, socially distancing from staff and activity instructors, so that people can relax and enjoy their holiday in their social bubbles. The range of activities on offer include trekking, biking and archery. Head to the website for more info or to download the brochure: <http://www.kenelmyouthtrust.org.uk/adventure-holidays.html>

**Summer camp:** the annual Kenelm Youth Trust Summer camp is being held online this year. More information available here: <http://www.kenelmyouthtrust.org.uk/summer-camp-online.html>

### Gap Year Kenelm Youth Trust

Kenelm Youth Trust are looking for young adults aged 18-25 who are down-to-earth, ready to grow in their faith and who are enthusiastic about working with young people. A gap year with Kenelm comes with accommodation in Alton where volunteers live in community with other young Christians, so we are seeking out those who work well in a team. <http://www.kenelmyouthtrust.org.uk/gap-years.html>



### The Catholic Pupil Profile Virtues

This half term the two Virtues that are a focus for us and the other Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Birmingham are to be 'learned' and 'wise'. The challenge is to be learned, finding God in all things; and wise in the ways we use our learning for the common good.

### Sacramental Preparation

The events of 2020 have had a profound impact upon the lives of people throughout the world. It has been felt especially in our school and parish communities. In particular, both the preparation for and the celebration of the

Sacraments of First Reconciliation, First Holy Communion and Confirmation for children in Year 3 and Years 5 and 6 has been a great chasm within our life of faith.

Whilst the situation is still not clear as to when exactly this may happen, St. Teresa's School and Fr. David are thinking towards the future and what can be done in readiness for "a time that allows for families and friends to gather safely within our churches." Even with the very recent announcement giving permission for Collective Worship, there will still be restrictions which will continue to have a bearing upon these important Sacraments.

It is important to remember that whilst schools play a vital role in the formation of children to receive the Sacraments, these celebrations are parish events and ultimately it is for the parish priest to determine, alongside guidance from Archbishop Bernard Longley; the Archbishop of Birmingham, how and when these will take place.

We do not want children of this year's Year 3, Year 5 and Year 6 to miss out on this crucial part of their journey of faith. We want you to know that we are considering various options but we foresee that these Sacraments will be celebrated in the new academic year, when safe.

For those children in Year 6 who were preparing to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, we will be in contact with parents when further guidance is issued. Currently, we would envisage a date being set in the new academic year and inviting children to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. With this please ensure that your contact details are updated with the office.

### **Term Dates 2020-2021**

The term dates for next academic year, which are below, are also on the school website. St. Teresa's School term dates for next academic year are:

#### *Autumn Term 2020:*

*Tuesday 1st September 2020 - Friday 23rd October 2020*

*Monday 2nd November 2020 - Friday 18th December 2020*

*(Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September is a Teacher Training Day. The children will return to school on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September).*

#### *Spring Term 2021:*

*Monday 4th January 2021 - Friday 12th February 2021*

*Monday 22nd February 2021 - Thursday 1st April 2021*

*(Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January is a Teacher Training Day. The children will return to school on Tuesday 5th January).*

#### *Summer Term 2021:*

*Monday 19th April 2021 - Friday 28th May 2021*

*Monday 7th June 2021 - Wednesday 21st July 2021*

Please note there are three other Teacher Training Days to be confirmed.

### **Staffing for September 2020**

The teachers for next academic year are:

Reception: Miss Gravell

Year 1: Miss Goupilliere

Year 2: Mrs Byrne

Year 3: Mrs Allport

Year 4: Miss Gibbon

Year 5: Miss Gold

Year 6: Miss Walk

Inclusion Manager: Miss Shirley

Mrs Gogna and Mrs Lal will be teaching across several classes. Mrs Jones, Mrs Dignan, Mrs Carbery, Mrs Keogh, Mrs Murdock and Miss Bennett will be working in support of the children.

At the start of the academic year, due to an underlying medical condition, Mrs Byrne is unlikely to be with Year 2. If this is the case, Mrs Lal will be teaching Year 2.

As there has not been the opportunity for children to meet their teachers for next year and spend time in their new classroom, the class website pages for next year have been set up now. The teachers will be able to welcome their new class on the relevant class page for 2020-2021.

Should the children wish to get a flavour of life in their new class it would be a good idea to take a look at the 2019-2020 class page for the relevant class.

I am sorry to say that we have three staff members leaving us at the end of this school year. Two of our valued teaching assistants; Mrs Roberts, who has been with the school for twenty-seven years and Mrs Dawson, who has been with us for sixteen years are leaving. Also, Mrs McKenna, a dinner supervisor who has been with the school for thirty-eight years, is leaving. This is a staggering eighty-one years of service to the children of St. Teresa's School! We will miss these valued colleagues and friends greatly and wish them all the best.

### Year 6



At the end of what has been a challenging year for all please keep in mind our Year 6 children. This is not the way that they or their parents/carers would have wanted to leave school. Although, as was noted by one of the children earlier this week, 'We are unique!'

This class had a challenging start to life at school in 2013, as a month after they started in Reception there was a fire at school which meant that they, and all of the children at the school at the time, were hosted at two other local schools for several weeks. Then school was closed for a day in June 2016 due to flooding. The class leave us now amidst the current crisis. The children's journey through school has been somewhat biblical!

Goodbye, best wishes and God Bless to the class of 2020:

Sam, Henna, Chiaku, Rohan, Karam, O'Shae, Dezaunte, Ethan, Mohan, Ella, Umayer, Ben, Rosa, Adan, Tea, Nikola, Nyle, Michael, Ruben, Amiya, Tia, Hien, Zofia, Prince, Sukhsimran, Sarvan, Ewa, Shaivi, Uyen-Thi and Noah.

### Dates for the Diary

- Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July at 3.20 p.m. - End of the academic year. Have a wonderful summer. Be safe!
- Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September - Year 1 to Year 6 children return to school for the start of the 2020-2021 academic year.
- Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> to Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September - Individual parent/child meetings for new Reception cohort
- Monday 7<sup>th</sup> to Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> September - New Reception class in for half a day, either morning or afternoon.
- Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> and Friday 18<sup>th</sup> September - all Reception children in from 9.00 - 12.00, including dinner.
- Monday 21<sup>st</sup> September onwards - Reception class in full time.
- Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> October - End of the first half of the Autumn Term.

Have a restful and enjoyable summer and stay safe,

D. Corkery

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