



# St. Teresa's Catholic Primary School Newsletter

## Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2021

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

During last week's Congratulations Assembly and in last week's newsletter I set all of the children who are working from home a 'homework' task. Children, your homework was to look after whoever is looking after you at home - to do something to help them at this challenging time and to say thank you to whoever it is that is taking care of you and helping you with your school work; to give whoever is looking after you a big hug and kiss - if it was safe to do so, and to tell them that you love them.

Children, I do hope that you have got top marks for that homework! As well as making whoever looks after you feel happy, I think that doing this homework would have helped you to feel happy and proud also. It is not too late to do this homework - in fact it can be done anytime and numerous times to help your family at this challenging time.

This week is Children's Mental Health Week, and as well as helping you, the children, saying thank you will also be a huge boost for your parents/carers. We are moving forward with trying to bring groups of children together virtually, with the priority being on well-being and having the opportunity to be in contact with each other and support each other.

The children have been considering various aspects of mental health and well-being within the theme of 'Express Yourself'. Children, if you have a favourite way of expressing yourself such as; art and craft, design and construction, music, dance, sport, dressing up, drama or anything you would like to share, ask your parents/carers to send to photograph to your class teacher on the relevant year group's email address and we can share these on the school website.

Miss Gibbon has been busy organising a gift for each child in school which will help you to develop physical skills and support their wellbeing. We hope to be able to provide these to you soon. Parents/carers as support for you and your children you may wish to download a selection from the following apps:

- Dreamykid - a meditation and healing activities app for younger age groups
- Headspace - a support for meditation
- Sesame Street: Breathe, Think, Do - a support for problem solving, self-control, planning and task persistence
- Mindful Powers - a 'gaming' support tool for well-being and mental health
- Chillpanda - measures heartrate and suggests activities based on a child's state of mind and teaches breathing techniques
- Mindful Gnats- for older children to raise awareness of mind, body and the world

Parents/carers may also wish to download 'The Waiting Room' or 'TWR' app, which is a directory, divided into twenty-four areas, of services that may be needed at this time.

Once again this week, my thanks to the teaching assistants who have been telephoning parents/carers during this week to discuss how things are at home. There are families who, for a variety of reasons are facing real challenges at this time. Please continue to share with us - we know that it is important for our children to be able to talk about how they are feeling, but is also important for us as adults. Mrs Byrne, our Mental Health and Well-being lead continues to work with children, staff members and adults and I thank her for her vital work in this area.

Please be aware that although we are providing work for children to complete at home, we do recognise the challenges with a range of issues. It has been really helpful to staff when parents are not coming into school to collect work to receive, by email, images of the children's work. Please do continue to do this. Do what you can do and have been doing - we will support where we can and do not wish to add to any pressures that you are facing.

We are aware of parents/carers who are not engaging; not accepting contact from school, with no work either being collected or requested from school and no evidence of returned work. If there is a genuine issue we will support but if this is a lack of parental responsibility we are challenging these and do be aware that this is a safeguarding issue. For these parents/carers, as the Safeguarding lead at school, I have been, and will continue to be, contacting you to address these concerns.

Children working at home, I do not want to have to call your parents/carers to speak to you about your behaviour regarding your attitude to work, getting up and going to bed at appropriate times, washing and dressing, your manners or any aspect relating to school life. Remember, you may not be here in person but you are still part of St. Teresa's School and I do not expect any person to let our school down at this time.

My thanks to parents /carers who have continued to return work to school - this has been a real help in energising the staff to know that their work is being supported at home as well as evidencing that the children are using their time purposefully and learning. There are a number of photographs on the class pages of the school website which have been forwarded by parents/carers, these include delicious looking cupcakes from Year 1!

Staff are self-testing when they get home in the evenings twice a week with lateral flow devices (LFDs). Any positive results will result in the relevant class bubble being closed immediately. If this is the case, parents and carers will be informed as soon as possible through a text, an email message and on the home page of the school website.

With the numbers of children attending school, teachers are with groups of children throughout the day. Understandably, this is creating a lot of anxiety amongst staff whose view - as is mine - is that the purpose of the government guidance is to prevent the spread of coronavirus by limiting numbers of children in school.

This week, on Monday there were fifty-six children in school. On Tuesday, there were fifty-four children in. On Wednesday, there were fifty-six children in school. Yesterday, there were fifty-nine children in and today there are fifty-one children in school.

Last week, it was announced that schools in England may be returning more fully from Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March. This is a situation that we will be informed about near the time. It was also announced last week that schools in England will not be open to children of critical workers and vulnerable children during the half term break (15<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> February).

### Catholic Life

The Wednesday Word booklet for this weekend is available on the 'Home' page of the school website. Please do share this weekend's gospel with its theme of 'Prayer' - this gospel reading is, once again, relevant at this time.



Please keep those affected by coronavirus in your prayers.

Thank you to Ryleigh and Ameria for leading our Collective Worship on Monday of last week and thank you to Tatyana, T'nae, Madison and Kemai for leading this week's Collective Worship on Monday afternoon.

### Catholic Pupil Profile



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 Grateful and Generous.

We are growing to be grateful for our own gifts, for the gift of other people and for the blessings of each day: and to be generous with our gifts for others. I cannot think of more appropriate virtues to reflect upon at this time.

### Dates for the Diary

- Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> February - Safer Internet Day
- Friday 12<sup>th</sup> February at 3.20 p.m. - End of the first half of the Spring Term.
- Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February - INSET Day. Only staff in school.
- Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February at 8.50 a.m. - Start of the second half of Spring Term for children.
- Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> April at 3.20 p.m. - End of the Spring Term.
- Monday 19<sup>th</sup> April - INSET Day. Only staff in school.
- Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> April at 8.50 a.m. - Start of the Summer Term for children.

Keep safe,

D. Corkery

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