

St. Augustine of Canterbury Catholic Primary School

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“Created by God to love and learn”

Friday 8th January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

School closure and allocation of places.

Following the government announcement of school closures on Monday evening, we used our INSET day to organise a temporary opening for parents of critical workers and also plan for our home learning.

We required an 11am cut off time on Tuesday to arrange groups, however we received several requests after this time, which we have done our best to accommodate. Requests for critical worker places has resulted in 42% of our children attending school for some or all of the week. As you can appreciate, this is very unlike the last lockdown and does not resemble the announced school closures.

It is important to note that schools are closed to **all** because rates of infection have increased. The exceptions are critical worker children and vulnerable pupils, which includes looked after children and those with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP). We have therefore been asked to limit the numbers of children in school to those where it is **absolutely essential**. The advice from the Local Authority around allocation of places to key workers is as follows:

‘If a child has two critical worker parents, then they will require a place, equally if a child has a single parent who is also a critical worker they will also require a place. Where there are two adults/parents within the household, where only one is a critical worker but the other is not, then if the one who is not a critical worker is able to provide educational childcare then this is the preference; as this can then reduce the numbers of child in attendance, minimising risk of any virus transmission.’

I must therefore ask that if you are a two parent household where only one of you is a key worker, please can you seriously consider keeping your child at home and using the remote learning package that is on offer. We must maintain strict health and safety procedures in school for the protection of the whole school community. This will be easier to do with less children and adults in school. If we have to reduce numbers, the pupils with two key worker parents will be prioritised over those where only one parent is.

Cohorts:

As a result of the increase in numbers, we have had to change our plans and revert to the 6 class bubbles we were using prior to Christmas. Even with the increase, each bubble may have up to 16 children. **Please note: children will not be able to move between bubbles or change cohorts.**

The classes will be in the same locations and with the same teachers as before. This will enable staff to plan more effectively for the educational needs of the class, whilst also providing the same content online for children at home.

Teaching assistants and support staff may be reallocated to support larger bubbles or where there is need for cover. The classes are as follows:



Cohort 1 = Reception– Mrs Allen & Ms Kirby
 Cohort 2 = Year 1– Mrs Bowen
 Cohort 3 = Year 2/3 – Mr Isaacs
 Cohort 4 = 3/4 - Mrs Grew and Mrs Swonnell
 Cohort 5 = 4/5 – Mr Newman
 Cohort 6 = 5/6 – Miss Triggs

Entry/Exit times:	Yr R	Year 1	Year 2/3	Year 3/4	Year 4/5	Year 5/6
Entry/exit	Side gate 8:40am to 9am We will continue to trial our 'trickle entry' to avoid congestion				Car park – 4/5 and 5/6 classroom doors 8:40am-9am (trickle entry)	
Time of leaving	3.00pm*	3.05pm	3:10pm	3:15pm	3:10pm	3.15pm

Entry and exit

You will note from the above table that we will continue to trial our 8:40-9am trickle entry. This means that you should drop off your child between these times, which we hope will avoid congestion. As with the last lockdown, we will collect any siblings so that they can leave at the same time and we have shortened our end of day timings to help facilitate this. Please note the slightly earlier finish times will enable our busy teachers to mark, plan and check the online learning.

Breaks and lunch

Break and lunch times will be staggered as before, to maintain the bubbles. Children will continue to eat packed lunches in classrooms but I can confirm we will return to our hot meal provision on Wednesdays from next week, 13th January. The menu on parent pay is correct we will contact you if there is a change to the options.

Uniform & PE

A reminder that children should be in full school uniform please. On the two days when your child has PE, they should come into school wearing PE kit. As we are reverting to our former structure, this will be their usual days, please see link: [St Augustine of Canterbury Catholic Primary School - PE days \(staugustinedownend.org.uk\)](http://staugustinedownend.org.uk)

Wrap around care

Unfortunately due to staffing restrictions and low demand, we are unable to operate our breakfast and after-school clubs during this period of lockdown.

Remote learning

A reminder: for children at home, we have increased our remote learning provision. Teachers will be uploading 3hrs of work per day, as required by the government guidelines. This will be in the form of a weekly plan, divided into individual daily English and Maths lessons, plus an over-arching themed piece of work to last the week. We are also recommending Joe Wicks daily YouTube PE lessons. We hope to be able to invite you to our Teams assemblies on Mondays and Fridays, as before.

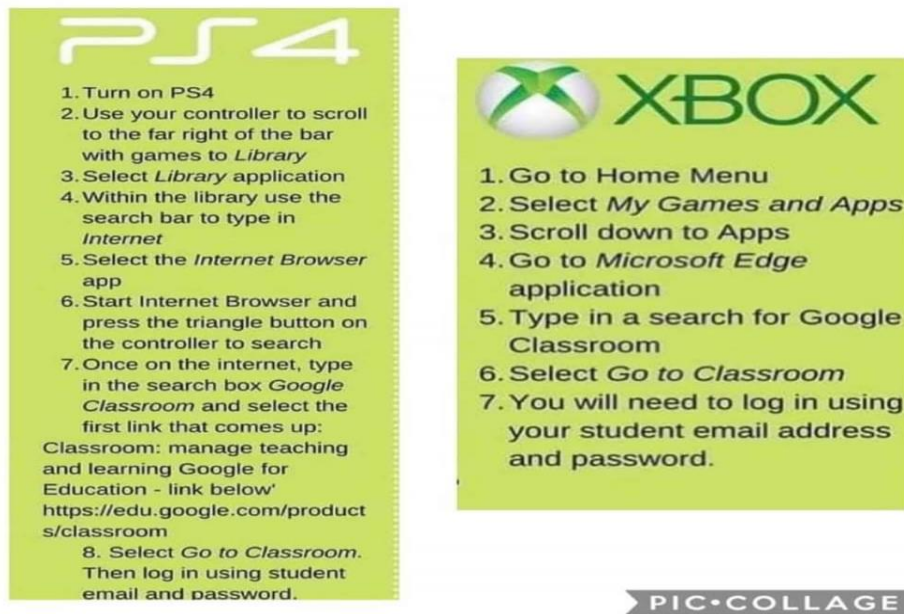
Unfortunately, teachers will not have the time to extensively check and monitor home learning. Each teacher is in class all day with their bubbles, therefore they will be unable to provide live lessons at present. In effect, they are being asked to perform two separate roles simultaneously: providing key



worker lessons and home learning at the same time. All this is at a time when government advice is to stay at home wherever possible.

We are constantly looking at ways to improve our offer but we are a small school with limited staff and our daily priority is to cover the bubbles in classes. Regretfully, we will no longer have the time or capacity to print work packs, for the above reasons.

Mr Newman has kindly put together an easy to follow guide to using google classrooms, with a troubleshooting section. You can access google classrooms on any internet enabled device, including smart phones, tablets and some games consoles, such as X-box and PlayStation 4.



If you are still unable to access google classroom, we can provide spelling and grammar workbooks for you to take home.

Support during lockdown

I appreciate that these are challenging times for everyone. If parents at home would like any parenting support during lockdown they can email our parent link worker, Mrs Chris Cranney:

Christine.Cranney@staugustinesprimary.org.uk

Chris will then call them you on a Tuesday or Thursday afternoon, alternatively you can call or email the office and we will pass on the message.

I would like to reiterate that as the rates of the virus are dramatically increasing, it is ever more important that we all do our utmost to keep everyone safe. If you can keep your child at home, you are helping enormously to keep our children and our hard-working staff safe.

Thank you all for your continued co-operation and patience.

May God bless you all,

M Hilliam

Mr Mark Hilliam, Headteacher

