

St. Augustine of Canterbury Catholic Primary School

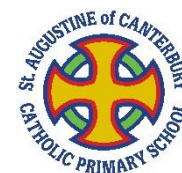
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“Created by God to love and learn”

Monday 1st February 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Reallocation of bubble places with effect from Tuesday 23rd February.

On Wednesday, the Prime Minister announced that schools will not be reopening for pupils until the 8th March at the earliest. Whilst this is very disappointing for parents, it does underline the government message that schools should remain closed for ALL children unless a place is **absolutely essential**. I would like to express my sincere thanks to the parents that have made many sacrifices to keep their children at home. The advice for all of us is: ‘stay at home, protect the NHS and save lives’, which of also applies to schools.

As you may know, Miss Triggs is expecting her first child in late spring. Following government and medical guidelines, Miss Triggs will be shielding from 28 weeks, which is February 8th. It is therefore necessary to combine the 4/5 and 5/6 bubbles together, which will result in a bubble of 22, should all the children attend. Mr Newman will therefore be supporting this larger bubble with Miss Harvey, our student teacher. On Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings, the bubble will return to their 5/6 classroom under the supervision of Mrs Ravening our HLTA (Higher Level Teaching Assistant). Miss Triggs will teach the children remotely from home, and it is hoped that she will be able to include the rest of the cohort after a trial week.

In light of the above, it is necessary to review **all 5 bubbles**. We will now require proof of critical worker status for your child to be certain of a place in school. Essential/critical workers are:

- NHS frontline clinical staff or administrators (e.g. NHS 911) working directly with Coronavirus patients
- First responders i.e. paramedics or those who support them
- Police officers and some civilian police staff e.g. dispatchers
- Firefighters
- Those medical staff involved in the vaccination programme
- Other frontline NHS workers e.g. midwives, pathologists, CT scan operators, radiographers
- Those in NHS support services needed to keep hospitals and clinics running e.g. porters and full time cleaners – please explain when you contact us
- School staff who are attending on-site provision at their own schools, e.g. looking after the children of Critical Workers themselves.
- Vulnerable pupils - Looked After Children, post-Looked After Children, pupils with EHCPs, pupils who have social worker involvement

It may also become necessary to prioritise children where both parents are critical workers or single parents who are critical workers. Where parents are working from home, you are being asked to keep your child off school, regardless of your role. Where you are eligible, you are being asked to only bring in your child on the minimum amount of days. Many of you have done this and we are extremely grateful. If there are still places, we will then consider the government list of further critical workers.

The governors and I agree that we must take these steps to lower numbers, reduce transmission and protect staff – and the community as a whole. We have taken this difficult decision because we are



now having to tell critical worker parents that the bubbles are full. We are also accommodating a significant number of children who fall into the vulnerable category, as defined in the government guidance (listed above).

If you have not already done so, please provide proof of critical worker status for your child by 9am on Friday 5th February and the days you require a place. Please also let the school know whether you are able to remove your child from school for the reasons above. To reiterate, we will be faced with difficult decisions about who can access a school place without these measures.

Many of you kindly replied to my parent survey with very positive and supportive comments. One theme that came through was how much of a challenge home learning can be, and how difficult it can be for children, knowing that their peers are at school. In response to your feedback, our hard working teachers have agreed to increase their remote learning provision. They are now recording themselves reading stories and today they will conduct weekly check-ins with groups of approximately 6 children via Teams. These will last for 15 minutes and give children the chance to greet each other and ask any questions. Reception will be at 3:15pm on Thursdays (Mrs Allen) and Fridays (Ms Kirby), Year 1 will be Wednesdays at 3pm, Year 2/3 will be on Wednesdays at 2pm, Year 3/4 will be on Wednesdays at 3:15pm, Year 4/5 will be on Mondays at 3:15pm and Year 5/6 will also be on Mondays, at 3:20pm.

Our staff have limited capacity to support children at home due to the high numbers in school. We have prioritised areas of need and plan to provide live learning where we can. This will include two 30 minute phonics lessons (Mondays and Fridays at 11:30am) for year 1 pupils at home and live teaching for year 5/6 from Miss Triggs when she is shielding. Miss Triggs will also be recording assemblies for teachers to upload to google classrooms to watch at home or school. We will be looking at ways to release our teaching assistants if we can to teach live sessions for children on our SEN (special educational needs) register.

I have considered your comments carefully and, as a result, I would also like to help connect to the children at home by hosting a further weekly assembly, but just for them. It will be on Wednesday mornings at 9:15am.

Support during lockdown

I am very aware that these are challenging times for everyone. For those at home, I want to say that you are all doing remarkably well and I thank you for what you are doing. Please do not feel that you should complete all the tasks if you cannot manage them. 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.

We have a small number of DfE issued laptops that we can loan to those families without a device. If you do not have access to a tablet or computer, you can contact Chris at the above email and your request will be considered.

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



Mr Mark Hilliam, Headteacher



Ms Jenefer Morgan, Chair of Governors

