



Welcome back to the start of a new term, certainly a start that none of us were expecting or hoping for. As has so often been the case in the last 10 months, you have just rolled up your sleeves and gotten on with. Thank you for your patience, adaptability and positivity in adapting to this very unfortunate and challenging situation. We hope you all have a good weekend after the no-doubt busy week that you've all had and we look forward to seeing the children (virtually or in person) next week.

Live Sessions on Zoom

Thank to you for getting up and running with the home learning so well this week. The Zoom sessions appear to be going well, with only the occasional technical hitch so far, which I'm sure we will improve on over time. There are two important things that you can do to make sure that your child is able to join Zoom sessions without issue:

1. Please ensure that your child can be easily identified by the name they are logging in with. Teachers will not admit anyone to a session where the name can not be matched to a pupil in the class. Where there are two siblings in the family, you could consider saving both pupil names as the username e.g: 'Ben / Sarah Smith'.
2. Please do your best to ensure your child joins the meeting on time. Teachers are new to this way of working too and they have a lot to contend with; ensuring pupils are engaged, sharing work etc. It disrupts the flow of the session if they are constantly having to stop to admit pupils who have been late joining the sessions. I would recommend joining the waiting room 5 mins before the session takes place, certainly no later than 2 mins before the session takes place.

No pupil will be 'in trouble' for missing a session, as we appreciate that you are all doing an amazing job of supporting your childrens learning, despite the many, many other things that you are contending with each day in addition to home-learning.

Deadline for Reception Place Applications for Sept 2021

The deadline for applications for places for September 2021 is fast approaching. All applications need to be submitted by 15th Jan, both SIF forms and electronic ones (both must be submitted.)

Home Learning

As with Zoom sessions, you all deserve a big pat of on the back for your efforts in getting your children up and running with the Google Classroom learning platform this week. It's a new way of working for all of us and I'm sure there has been the odd head-scratching moment along the way (for teachers as well as parents/pupils). However, you have all worked amazingly together to troubleshoot problems and help each other to navigate the system so far, and we are very grateful for your patience.

There is a very broad spectrum of contexts in which parents are operating. There are families who have the capacity to support several hours of work each day for their one child, and at the other end of the spectrum there are families with 3 children and two full-time working parents, doing their best to manage their own jobs while supporting their children in between. The work we put on the Google Classroom portal is there to satisfy the needs of families who have the time to meet the government expectation that we provide approx. 3 hours of learning per child per day. However, you should have the complete freedom to do as much or as little of the work as works for you in your family context. All core work covered in this period of closure will be revisited when pupils are back in school, so please do not let the home learning be a source of stress for you or your child.

Don't just take our word for this. Here's what the DfE themselves say to parents:

No one expects parents to act as teachers, or to provide the activities and feedback that a school or nursery would. Parents and carers should do their best to help children and support their learning while dealing with other demands.



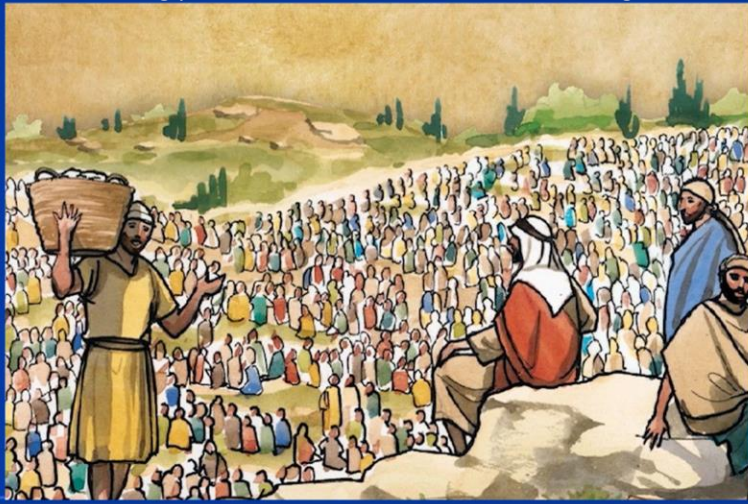
St Mary: Lorelei Bradley
St. Francis: Isabelle Maxwell-Fidler
St. Joseph: George Waite
St. Bernadette: Ted Ryan
St. Theresa: Lola Tomassi
St. Peter: George Beckett
St Paul: Harvey Upfold



St Mary: Nicolas Pedicini
St. Francis: Eoin Doohan
St. Joseph: Alex Hill
St. Bernadette: Clara Westwood
St. Theresa: Orlaith Shaw
St Peter: Jack Upfold
St Paul: Alex Mooney

Key Worker Places

One of the biggest challenges so far since the lockdown was announced has been the very difficult task of allocating key worker places in school. It has felt like the feeding of the 5000 at times, but without the ability to perform the miracle of creating extra staff or classrooms. Every extra pupil that comes on site increases the risk of infection to the staff and pupils already here and we are genuinely sorry that we have not been able to accommodate every request. We currently have no capacity to offer additional spaces on any day. Families who have already requested but not been allocated places are on a waiting list. We will continue to review availability and if extra capacity is available we will make every effort to offer those spaces. I would also appeal to families who currently have children attending, that if you have the capacity to reduce your provision needs by even a day, please let us know as this will support us in offering places to other families on the waiting list.



Purley Food Hub

The combined issues of this very cold weather, and the economic issues that the pandemic have created, have meant that there are more families than ever in need in our local community. Purley Food Hub are appealing for donations of long-life food for their food bank. If you have the capacity to do so, they would appreciate any donations. You could take any donations there directly or we will be running a collection throughout next week, so if key worker families would like to donate some food products, please bring them along at drop off. If you are not a key worker family but you live near the school, you are more than welcome to drop off anything you can spare at school throughout next week. There will be food-bins available just inside the school gate so you don't have to come into the building. There's a full list of the donations they would like on the attachment to this newsletter.



Funeral Arrangements – Mrs Evelyn Browning

Mrs Browning's funeral will take place next Monday 11th January at 12.00. The service will be streamed live on the St Aidan's parish Youtube channel. Please keep her husband and children in your thoughts and prayers at this difficult time.
RIP Evelyn.

Achievement

Well done to Liam in Year 3 for his *Gold* Mathletics certificate, to Harry K in Year 2 for his rugby award and to Josiah in Year 1 for his Mathletics silver award. Well done boys.

Weekly Challenges

Weekly challenges are back! Every week there will be an optional extra-curricular activity for pupils to participate in should they wish to do so. Mrs Paull will send out the challenges every Friday. We love sharing your outcomes in the newsletter and on Twitter so if you have a go, please make sure to send us a photo.

Starting Monday 11th January
Yes, challenge are back!

Cookery Challenge

With the help of your family take a look at what you have in your food cupboards and design a meal or snack based around what you have at home.
With support, create your own 'Store Cupboard Surprise'.
You could either make a recipe you already know and give it your own spin make something completely new.
The more imaginative the better.
Hopefully it will be a chance to exchange some recipes.

Three small photographs are arranged horizontally at the bottom of the challenge card. The first shows a white bowl filled with colorful, round candies. The second shows a plate of food, possibly a salad or a dish with vegetables and meat. The third shows a plate with several heart-shaped pastries or cookies, some with red toppings.