



Our Lady Catholic Primary School

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18th March, 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you for your cooperation, patience and support as we continue to deal with the challenging impact of Covid-19. The Government's update yesterday made it clear that their policy currently remains the same in relation to keeping schools open. As such, providing we have adequate staffing levels, we will remain open. However, we must make it clear that staffing across the school is beginning to become stretched and, if staffing becomes further compromised, we would need to consider the possibility of closing the school. In this event, parents and carers would be informed at the earliest possible opportunity (via text message, email, on the school website and via our social media platforms).

Pupil attendance is at 76.9% today and I know that news of parents, staff and children in isolation may have caused concern for many. However, I should state that the school is not currently aware of any confirmed cases of Coronavirus in the school community. The increased 14 days isolation and its extension to the entire household aims to further strengthen this protection. **This is why we are enforcing this strictly** and are not open to negotiation in relation to an earlier return to school, even if symptoms are improving. As a school, we fully understand and appreciate many of your concerns. As such, please note that if you need or choose to keep your child at home, you will not be penalised. If your child is going to be away from school, please notify the school office.

Our communication aims to be open and transparent and I can assure you that we are continually taking advice from the relevant authorities (including Herts County Council, Public Health, Government Departments and the Diocese of Westminster). I implore you to be careful about information, comments and speculation shared on social media and WhatsApp groups, which can cause anxiety and distress to others in the community. I appreciate, as a parent myself, that this is based out of concern and anxiety for loved ones. However, if there is information that you need to know, we will share it via the official channels. If you are concerned, please email the school and we will respond with any accurate information that we are able to share. It may, however, take a little time to get back to you at the moment as our priority has to be ensuring the safe running of the school and the wellbeing of both children and staff at this difficult time.

Today, the children will be coming home with packs of work. These are to be completed if the school is forced into a closure or if your child is in isolation and well enough to complete the tasks. **If your child is still attending school, please do not let them use these packs until the closure of school is confirmed.** Some links to online resources have also been uploaded onto the class pages of the school website and Early Years have uploaded links and other information on to Tapestry. In the event of school closure, staff will use these class pages to regularly set tasks.

To ensure that your child's learning continues during any potential closure, we have provided them with the following:

- A learning pack with work to be completed in a variety of curriculum subjects;
- Information regarding a whole school project on Welwyn Garden City and the centenary;
- An exercise book and a pen/pencil, which can be used to complete any work which cannot be completed on worksheets;
- A parent/carer guide on how to use the Twinkl website to further children's learning or for revision in key curriculum areas.
- Spelling and vocabulary books to continue revision of spellings and definitions

We would ask that, where possible, children are supported with their learning tasks. We shall also be sending home an extra reading book during this time so children will have two reading books and one library book. Please try and read to your child/listen to your child read on a daily basis and ask questions about what they have read so they can continue to progress accordingly. It would also be helpful for children to practise their times tables using the Times Table Rockstars website.

Further information will be sent out in relation to work as soon as we are able to do so, including information for families where a child may need extra reassurance due to their individual needs. No doubt, we will be in touch again tomorrow with further information.

May I take this opportunity again to thank you for your amazing response to a difficult and unprecedented situation for our community. It is great to be a part of a community whose members truly and deeply care for each other.

Thank you for your ongoing and valuable support.

Kind regards,

PP 

Richard Curry