



# St. John Vianney Catholic Primary School



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Dear Parents and carers,

Further to a number of national updates I wanted to let you know how things are going for us here at St John Vianney.

## National lockdown

Following the Prime Minister announcement on Monday night at 8pm that school should reduce the number of children physically in the building and the stay at home message, I would like to thank so many of you for working so hard to help us reduce our numbers. For those of you who need to send your children into school, the fact that you are being so helpful and supportive is also really lovely, so thank you to everyone for working with us. It has been an incredibly busy week for staff to turn all of their in school teaching plans, overnight, into online plans.

## COVID-19

Please follow the national guidance of staying at home wherever possible, following the latest guidance. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-lockdown-stay-at-home> The idea of the national lockdown is to minimize all of your social contacts, reducing the spread of the virus.

Can I also ask that if any of your household displays symptoms, that you **DO NOT** send your child into school? Please seek guidance from NHS 119 and where possible access a Covid-19 test. When a negative test is returned or the relevant period of isolation has been completed your child can return safely to school. This advice helps keep everyone in our school community as safe as possible.

## Positive COVID-19 test result

For any child currently attending school, if any member of your household is waiting for a test result please let school know immediately. If any member of your household has tested positive, then please isolate everyone at home and inform school immediately. If a child, who is currently attending school, returns a positive COVID-19 test then in consultation with Public Health England I will send the whole bubble of children and staff home to isolate for 10 days.

For any family who has tested positive but are learning at home, please let us know and feel free to ask for any support you need. Whilst I cannot do everyone's Morrison's shopping, if there is anything we can do to support you we will.

### **Hands, Face, Space and Ventilation**

Pupils are washing hands and under supervision using antibacterial gel on a very regular basis and we ask that you reinforce this message at home as much as possible. School is encouraging everyone, pupils and staff, to wherever possible maintain their space from each other. National guidance states that rooms should wherever possible be ventilated, as this time of year the air outside is cold and with all the windows open it can get chilly, pupils are encouraged to wear vests or t-shirts under their uniform.

### **Welcome back to all of our children both at home and at school**

Firstly, to those children in school, a huge thank you for being so amazing, sensible and calm when coming into school under these strange circumstances and working so hard. They have also been telling us how hard the children are working who are at home. It would be great to hear the fabulous things you are doing at home, so please take a moment to email us and we will forward you comments, pictures and celebratory emails to the staff and their friend in school. [admin@stjohnvianney.newcastle.sch.uk](mailto:admin@stjohnvianney.newcastle.sch.uk)

### **Online interactions with teachers**

We are continuing to investigate new ways to improve the child to teacher live interactions and as such packs are being prepared for every child who is currently learning from home. There will be a number of age appropriate learning resources to help you and a school book to use to record all your work in. If your child's reading record was left in school at Christmas then this will also be included in the pack. We have started to arrange Teams login for all pupils, we are going to include new email addresses and logins in your packs, but PLEASE WAIT before you use them as we are going to introduce them group by group and we want to give you instruction and guidance packs. These packs will be hand delivered to your door next week, please be patient as we have a large number to send out.

### **Online Learning resources**

Every year group has had online learning uploaded this week to the school website, I know that there have been some teething issues with different packages such as publisher being used and we have tried to sort these as soon as we have been alerted. Next week Y2 – Y6 teachers are going to try to record themselves teaching over a PPT recording – we really hope this works, please let us know if it helps – we are hoping so – fingers crossed! We are hoping you will enjoy hearing your teachers talk you through some of your online learning.

### **We are here to help**

If when you are working through the online learning come across something which is proving particularly challenging and you would like to speak to a teacher, please feel free to ring the office and we will get someone to ring you back and try and help.

### **Facebook**

Facebook is being sorted in the background, and hopefully in the next week we can start sending home permission information and acceptable use policies for it – fingers crossed! Once it is all up and running it would be wonderful to have a chance to share all the wonderful learning which is happening at home and school.

### Laptops

Currently, our school has a government allocation of 26 laptops on order for our 472 pupils which have not yet been delivered to school. We have some school laptops which we are currently trying to separate from our school system, to help support families in genuine need. We have also put a link on the school website for your information to apply for free Wifi access, please feel free to use that.

### Phone calls home

Next week, teachers will start ringing every family of a pupil who is currently learning at home and asking how you are managing and if you need any help. Once again please be patient with us as there are a lot of people to ring, we have purchased some new mobile phones for teachers to use to ring out, so you will not always be contacted via the school landline. Not only are we touching base but it would be wonderful if you could share some of the fabulous things you are doing at home with staff. We are all in need of some positivity and the children who give us that smile and genuine moment of joy. If you miss your call, please feel free to ring back on the school number 0191 2672233 as teachers are using the mobiles for outgoing calls only. My aim is that every family will have at least one call every week, some siblings will find that each of their teachers ring and some families may want/need some extra support. We will do everything we can to help you during this difficult time.

### First Holy Communion

Very sadly, Mrs Meldrum, in consultation with Father Martin, have had to postponed the remaining First Holy Communion services. Once the national lockdown has finished she will be in touch to rearrange the remaining sacramental services.

### Reception Place Application

The deadline of the 15<sup>th</sup> January 2021, to apply for a place for your child to start Reception in Sept 2021, is fast approaching. [www.newcastle.gov.uk](http://www.newcastle.gov.uk) Please pass the word around to all your friends and families as we do not want anyone who would like to apply to miss the deadline.

### And finally,

Whilst I would have loved nothing better than meeting you all in person, currently that is not possible. Please always feel free to speak to me at the front gate in the morning or if you are at home, please feel free to ring school.

I continue to keep you and all of your families in my thoughts and prayers during this challenging time.

Best wishes,

*A D Thorpe*

Mrs A. D. Thorpe  
Head teacher