



# St. Richard's RC Primary School Newsletter 2020

Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020

## **A PRAYER DURING LOCKDOWN**

*Dear Lord, help us in this time of confinement. Help us to see it as an act of love, in solidarity with those who care for us and put their own lives on the line for the sake of others. Help us to "make room" for each other, even if room is scarce. Help us to find reserves of patience we never knew we had, to take offence less easily, to find in our hearts an easy apology when we are grumpy. Help us to be attentive, careful, and thoughtful. May we draw deeply from the well of our most loving homes. Amen.*

## **WEDNESDAY WORD ONLINE**

The Wednesday Word has understandably paused all printing for the time being. Whilst it is usually only an 'offline' paper-based resource, the Wednesday Word team have taken the generous decision to support families during these unusual circumstances with **free** interim online editions of The Wednesday Word. The edition for Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2020 is now available by visiting [www.wednesdayword.org](http://www.wednesdayword.org), clicking "Schools please click here for the Primary School version" and then following the link.

## **MAY IS THE MONTH OF MARY**

May is a special month of devotion to Mary, the Mother of God. May (which begins tomorrow) is the month when we can set extra time aside in order to look up to Mary as the perfect model to imitate and as a powerful helper to assist us in this time of need. In the Catholic tradition, we pray to Mary to intercede for us with her Son, we do not worship Mary. This month, we could ask Jesus to grant us a small amount of the heroic patience, angelic kindness and heavenly wisdom which Our Mother Mary demonstrates in such gracious abundance.



## **A MESSAGE FROM AFZAL KHAN (MP FOR MANCHESTER GORTON) ABOUT RAMADAN:**

*'Dear St Richard's Primary School, As-salam-alykum and Ramadan Mubarak to all my constituents and the Muslim community! No doubt, this year Ramadan will look different, however we must find the strength to keep the spirit of this blessed month alive. I want to stress the importance of keeping safe during this period. We must follow Government advice. That means we will not be able to go to the Mosque for prayers or Tarawih, or have Iftar with friends or family. I know this will be hard, but we will simply have to adapt. The Quran states: "Saving a life, is as though saving the whole of humanity." If you would like further information & guidance, please visit [Muslim Council of Britain's website](http://MuslimCouncilofBritain.org). I would encourage you to stay connected with family and friends during this month through technology, and do virtual Iftars, as I will be doing. This is a month of fasting, charity and blessing, so please give generously to those who are in need. Ramadan is also an opportunity to strengthen ourselves and our families within, so we can do more to serve humanity. I pray that this Ramadan is a peaceful and spiritually uplifting month for you and all your family. I wish everyone celebrating - Ramadan Kareem. Stay Blessed. Stay safe.'*

## **ONLINE RESOURCES ON THE SCHOOL WEBSITE**

Last week, we added French resources prepared by Madame O'Neil to our home learning web pages for Years 3 to 6. Additional (government approved) online resources are also on the Home Learning Pages of the website for each year group. Updated home learning resources prepared by the teaching staff of St Richard's for weeks 7 and 8 of the lockdown (Monday 4<sup>th</sup> – Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May) will appear on the school website before Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

## **SCHOOL REMAINS CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE**

St Richard's closed on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020. Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be. There is no requirement – even for parents who are key workers in critical sectors – to send their child(ren) to school if they do not need or want to. A downloadable application form (which must be printed off, filled in, signed and brought/posted to school) for parents who are key workers in critical sectors is available at [www.st-richards.manchester.sch.uk](http://www.st-richards.manchester.sch.uk)

## **STAYING IN TOUCH AND INFORMED WHILE WE ARE CLOSED**

Remember, if you need any support from school, please let us know by emailing [comments@st-richards.manchester.sch.uk](mailto:comments@st-richards.manchester.sch.uk). You are welcome to share any questions or concerns using the above email address and we will endeavour to respond. During the closure period, some families will also receive phone calls from school staff to have a chat about how things are going. Please make a habit of visiting the home page of the school website ([www.st-richards.manchester.sch.uk](http://www.st-richards.manchester.sch.uk)) regularly for updates on the coronavirus situation as it impacts on our school community (Thursday afternoon is a particularly good time to do this). We will continue to use ParentMail texts as well as the weekly newsletter in order to communicate important information while we are closed. The weekly newsletter will be available every Thursday afternoon at: [www.st-richards.manchester.sch.uk/key-information/letters-reports/](http://www.st-richards.manchester.sch.uk/key-information/letters-reports/)

## **SECURING A RECEPTION PLACE FOR YOUR CHILD**

Parents of children due to start in Reception at St Richard's in September 2020 have been informed and have been asked by the local authority admissions team to contact our school directly in order to accept a place. If you have not already done this, then please phone us on 0161 224 5552 as soon as possible and certainly by the closing date which is **today, 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020, by 3pm.**

## **VOUCHERS FOR PARENTS OF PUPILS ELIGIBLE FOR BENEFITS-RELATED FREE SCHOOL MEALS**

The Department for Education (DfE) has developed a national voucher scheme to support schools to provide parents of pupils eligible for benefits-related free school meals with supermarket vouchers in term time whilst school is closed to them.

From Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April, St Richard's has been able to provide eligible families with a weekly supermarket shopping voucher worth £15 per child. We will be providing vouchers electronically (which can then be redeemed online via a code). We can only do this if we have your up to date and useable email address.

Nationally, significant teething problems with this scheme continue unfortunately. At St Richard's we have input all the required information on time so that vouchers ought to be available. Rest assured, we will do all that we can to ensure that vouchers are available as soon as possible for all our eligible children. If you have not received your free school meal voucher code from the Government, firstly open your email and check your spam/junk folder, and if you still have not received it or are experiencing problems please email [freeschoolmealsparentscarers@edenred.com](mailto:freeschoolmealsparentscarers@edenred.com) for support.

There is also a 5 page FAQ document about the scheme at: [https://www.edenred.co.uk/Documents/DfE/DFE\\_FreeSchoolMeals\\_ParentCarerFAQs.pdf](https://www.edenred.co.uk/Documents/DfE/DFE_FreeSchoolMeals_ParentCarerFAQs.pdf)

## **MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL (MCC) WELFARE SCHEME**

Since the national scheme described above was introduced, the Manchester Welfare Scheme no longer operates for families who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals. The council will continue where it can to support households with no existing entitlement to free school meals that may be experiencing severe hardship. Residents who have become unemployed or experienced a substantial fall in income due to Covid19 are strongly advised to claim Universal Credit and Council Tax Support or seek other available financial support from the Government. See the Council's Coronavirus - [Benefits and money webpage](#) for more advice. The link is: <https://secure.manchester.gov.uk/info/500361/coronavirus/7928/coronavirus/4>

With every best wish,

Mr J Murray  
Headteacher  
St Richard's RC Primary School