



St. Richard's RC Primary School Newsletter 2021

Thursday 21st January 2021

THIS WEEK'S NEWSLETTER

Unusually, this week's newsletter is dominated by only two issues. The first of these is very important information for all parents about our revised and improved online home learning provision. The second is information about our decision to reopen Nursery to all pupils from today, Thursday 21st January.

OUR UPDATED ONLINE HOME LEARNING PROVISION

The DfE issued updated guidance to all schools on 7th January 2021 about remote learning. As a result, we have been busy building on our current online provision to ensure that a strong and compliant offer is in place which meets the needs of as many of our pupils as possible. Our revised provision has also been informed by Ofsted guidance which was published on 11th January 2021.

In a nutshell, St Richard's online home learning will be moving from Education City to Google Classroom from **Monday 25th January 2021**. Google Classroom allows better interaction, assessment and feedback than Education City. Just as with Education City, teachers will still check their pupils' daily engagement with tasks completed on Google Classroom.

Google Classroom is the platform where our teachers will upload high-quality sequenced daily tasks using a range of resources. Each class's work will appear at 8.15am each morning from 25th January onwards. Thereafter, work will appear daily and children must do that day's work on that day wherever this is possible. Children must have completed work by 3pm each day in order to receive feedback from their teacher on that day's work. Teachers will be marking and feeding back each day between 3pm and 4pm. Most feedback will be directed to the whole class, with exceptional responses getting short individual feedback (eg - if a pupil does really well or goes wrong with something they will get individual feedback). From Monday 25th January, via Google Classroom:

- All children from Nursery to Year 6 will be set a daily English lesson or lessons of approximately 1 hour.
- All children from Nursery to Year 6 will be set a daily Maths lesson or lessons of approximately 1 hour. This makes 2 hours of daily learning for N & R and is their daily limit.
- In Key Stage 1, as well as the above two hours, teachers will signpost pupils to afternoon enrichment activities already on our website home learning pages. This will bring the daily average content up to 3 hours for pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 and is their daily limit.
- For KS2, teachers will set a third lesson that broadly follows the subjects of our regular weekly afternoon timetable with a particular focus on Science, Art, French, Computing and PSHE. Typically, there will be one such lesson per day.
- Also for KS2 pupils, teachers will signpost pupils to afternoon enrichment activities. This will bring the daily average content up to 4 hours for pupils in Year 3 to Year 6.

Updated information on the online home learning page of the school website (<https://st-richards.manchester.sch.uk/home-learning-from-january-2021/>) will have guidance on keeping children safe online and information to help parents make the transition from Education City to Google Classroom, whilst most pupils remain away from school. Our long term plans for each year group will also be on the school website by Friday 22nd January (<https://st-richards.manchester.sch.uk/key-information/curriculum-2020-21/>) so that everyone can see our usual curriculum. From Monday 25th January, teachers will match their remote online curriculum to our usual curriculum as much as possible.

Your child's teacher will be able to send messages out to pupils using the 'Stream' function of Google Classroom. We have made the decision to not use the 'Stream' function for incoming messages from pupils for the time being. Please let your child(ren) know this. Teachers will use the 'Private Comments' function to improve advice-giving and reinforcement to pupils.

We will not be streaming any live content via Google Classroom. This is because we know that we have many families with multiple children and currently only one online device. There will be recorded content from teachers and – by using video content from organisations such as White Rose Maths, the BBC and Oak National Academy – we will ensure teaching content of the highest possible quality is provided to your children. All uploaded videos will have been thoroughly quality assured in advance by the teacher.

We are also currently striving to overcome barriers to digital access for our pupils by loaning out school-owned laptops. 48 laptops will go out this week. We are seeking to obtain more devices as soon as possible. In the first instance, this allocation is intended to enable the school to support disadvantaged children in Year 6 to Year 3 who do not already have access to a device at home. **Please do not contact school to ask for a device as we have pre-set and prioritised criteria to work through.** Keep using CGP books if you have no access to an online device at the moment.

Parents will be provided with login and password details for Google Classroom for their child(ren) through the post as soon as possible. We hope this will be before 8.15am on Monday 25th January but please be patient if they do not arrive before then.

There will be challenging teething problems in building our online home learning provision through Google Classroom but we believe this is the best option for our pupils. Thank you all in advance for being so patient, adaptable and for all your hard work in keeping your children safe, happy and learning at home.

NURSERY IS OPEN TO ALL PUPILS FROM TODAY

In order to protect the vast majority of funding that our Nursery requires in order to remain viable, the decision has reluctantly been made to reopen St Richard's to all Nursery pupils full time from today, Thursday 21st January. This decision is based on DfE insistence and follows local authority advice.

The DfE has stated that Nursery classes in schools should be open to all pupils, whilst simultaneously stating that only vulnerable children and children of critical workers can attend school from Reception to Year 6. Even for these children, the DfE advise that **'where possible, children should be looked after at home.'**

Many Nursery parents will therefore feel understandably anxious about sending their Nursery child to school during this current lockdown. **Let me be clear: you do not have to take up this offer and your child will not lose their place.** Rest assured that parents have the right to decide that the safest place for their child is currently at home. With the current infection rate, new variants of the disease, increased hospital admissions and (yesterday) England's highest ever daily death total from COVID-19, the rest of the school rightly remains closed to the vast majority of our pupils. Access to home learning provided by the Nursery will continue and will be strengthened further for the start of next week. If you do decide to send your child into Nursery from Thursday 21st January, please note:

- Nursery pupils who are **not** children of key workers or are **not** vulnerable children must arrive at 9.05am and must be picked up at 3pm each day.
- Nursery pupils who **are** key workers' or vulnerable children may continue to arrive from 8.30am and may still stay until 3.30pm each day.
- Parents should come alone and must wear a face mask to drop off/pick up their child.

If you initially decline a place but then later decide to send your Nursery child to school during this current period of school closure, you must phone school by midday on Thursday of the week **before** you want your child to come back in. If you don't do this, then your child will not be on the register and we will be unable to admit them. This is to ensure safe staffing levels are in place as part of our risk assessment arrangements.

With many thanks for your continuing support,

Mr J Murray
Headteacher
St Richard's RC Primary School