



St. Richard's RC Primary School Newsletter 2021

THANK YOU AND WELL DONE!

I want to begin this week's newsletter by saying a massive 'thank you and well done!' to all our teachers, support staff, parents and pupils who have been so brilliant in ensuring the smooth switchover to Google Classroom as our online home learning resource from last Monday. We are aware of the significant challenges which many of our families face in accessing online learning. If parents could please make sure that their child completes and turns in all the work set each day whenever this is possible and on a daily basis, then that would be greatly appreciated.

WE ARE CLOSED TO MOST PUPILS UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

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 to. Parents of Vulnerable Children have been contacted and encouraged to send their child to school but, again, they do not have to.

For parents of children currently attending school, please note that we will break up for half-term holidays on Friday 12th February and return to school on Tuesday 23rd February. School will be closed to vulnerable children and the children of critical workers during that time and no work will be set on Google Classroom during that time.

NOTIFYING SCHOOL OF POSITIVE TEST RESULTS FOR COVID-19 OVER THE HALF-TERM HOLIDAYS

Until 3.30pm on Monday 15th February, if your child has been in school and subsequently tests positive for COVID-19, parents are asked to notify school via an email to comments@st-richards.manchester.sch.uk. The school will then identify possible close contacts of your child in school and – if necessary – advise self-isolation for other pupils and staff (as your child may have been infectious whilst in school). This advice to self-isolate will be via a ParentMail text.

The comments@st-richards.manchester.sch.uk email account will not be monitored after 3.30pm on Monday 15th February. During this period, school staff will not be on-call at all times. Instead, there will be a limited period on each day where staff will check for notifications. After 3.30pm on Monday 15th February, **the school must not be contacted**. Instead, parents and carers must contact NHS Test and Trace. If this happens, school do not need to be informed about an absence until the first day of the second half-term (Tuesday 23rd February 2021).

HOME LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

It is vital that children at St Richard's continue to make excellent progress in their learning whilst we are closed to most pupils. From Monday 25th January onwards we would like children in Nursery and Reception to undertake 2 hours of home learning per day. Children in Key Stage One are expected to undertake 3 hours of home learning per day and pupils in Key Stage 2 are expected to undertake 4 hours of home learning per day. Please visit the offline and online home learning pages of the school website for the most up to date information.

HOME LEARNING – ONLINE

On Monday 25th January 2021, St Richard's online home learning switched to Google Classroom in order to allow better interaction and feedback. Thank you all for your patience whilst we made the switch and for your ongoing hard work in keeping your children safe and learning at home.

One of the particular challenges at St Richard's in providing home education is that we are aware that many of our pupils do not have access to an effective online device (desktop PC, laptop or tablet) for the times indicated above. Even when they do, we are aware that many families have more than one child and that devices have to be shared over the course of a school day. For this reason, we have made the decision not to have any live online teaching for the time being as we feel that it would disadvantage too many of our pupils in any one class.

HOME LEARNING – OFFLINE

In the week commencing Monday 11th January each child at St Richard's (Nursery to Year 6) who is not currently attending school received (through the post) published CGP books which closely mirror the curriculum that your child would follow if they were in school. These CGP books come with instructions on how they must be used but it is difficult to be too prescriptive as everyone's home circumstances (and access to online learning) are different. It would be appreciated if parents can try to match up the CGP pages with our online content where this is possible and available.

There are answers at the back of most CGP books, as well as a comments sheet at the front. Parents should use both in order to monitor their child(ren)'s efforts. Children must write their full name and class on the top right hand side of each CGP book. All CGP books must be returned to school with children after lockdown so that teachers can see how well they have done. House points and other prizes will be awarded for effort and neat work.

LAPTOP UPDATE

We are currently striving to overcome barriers to digital access for our pupils by loaning out school-owned laptops. We have now lent out 48 laptops and we will be loaning out even more devices as soon as possible. In the first instance, these laptops are intended to enable the school to support disadvantaged children from Year 6 to Year 3 who do not already have access to a device. We are now working on ways to get laptops to Key Stage One and Early Years pupils. Please keep using CGP books and afternoon enrichment projects if you have no access to a device or the internet at the moment. Please visit the offline learning page of this website for more details.

WEDNESDAY WORD ONLINE

The Wednesday Word team continues to support families with free online editions of the Wednesday Word. These are available every Wednesday by visiting www.wednesdayword.org, clicking "Schools please enter here for the Primary School version" and then following the link. This Wednesday's Word is **TEACHER**.

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

At St Richard's, we will not be providing packed lunches or food hampers to homes of children who are eligible for free school meals and who are not currently attending school. Instead, we are continuing to provide the £15 per week free school meals vouchers until further notice. If you are entitled to benefits-related free school meals and you are not currently receiving these vouchers, then please phone the school office on 0161 224 5552. At the time of writing this newsletter it is not certain whether the Government will be funding FSM vouchers over the February half-term break. Rest assured that, if they do, then the vouchers will continue to be allocated as they have been at St Richard's. We hope for an update by the time of next week's newsletter.

PARKING FURTHER AWAY AND WALKING TO SCHOOL

Even at a time when many of our pupils are not in school, we would encourage those parents who do drive to consider walking to school or parking further away and walking the final part of the journey. We know that we have families and pupils for whom there is no alternative to getting to school other than to use public transport. Please follow this link to find out more about [safer travel guidance for passengers](#)

With every best wish and hoping that you all stay safe and well,

Mr J Murray
Headteacher
St Richard's RC Primary School