

# St. Herbert's R C Primary School

## Autumn Term

19<sup>th</sup> November 2020



Dear Children, Parents and Guardians,

We are striving to keep you informed and therefore please read the following important information:

### **Flu vaccination**

On Tuesday, the pupils who had been given consent (this year was online direct to Intrahealth) received their flu vaccination. If you missed the email or have changed your mind, and now wish your child to be vaccinated, Intrahealth have asked parents to contact them directly on 0161 628 7428.

### **Foodbank Friday**

A quick reminder that next Friday (27th November) is Foodbank Friday - the children can wear non-uniform for school, and we ask for a tin of food in return. Many families have asked how they can further support our community, and we are suggesting that alongside a tin of food, if you can afford it, we are looking for 'Christmas' Food items eg: box of biscuits, selection boxes, tins of ham. The children that are self-isolating can wear their non-uniform on the first day back, Monday 30th November. Our last Foodbank Friday provided many local families and foodbanks with valuable contributions, and we hope to provide them again with food parcels in preparation for Christmas. We thank you all in advance for any donations you can afford.

### **Healthy Schools**

It is particularly important that we maintain our healthy school in the circumstances. Therefore please can I remind you that we only allow healthy snacks in school: break time snacks must be a piece of fruit or vegetable, bottles must only contain water not fizzy drinks or cordial, no chocolate is permitted at any time (the exception is for our Christmas Party afternoon, as stated in the newsletter sent last week), and if your child is celebrating a birthday we ask that if you want to bring something into school, they bring a book (no cake/chocolates etc). We are keen to maintain our Healthy School Standard, but more importantly we want the children to understand the importance of healthy food choices and the importance of this in the current situation, and save their treats for at home.

### **Google Classroom**

This is central to our remote education plan, and it is vital that all children access their google classroom. The government have stipulated that not only do children have work provided online during periods of self-isolation, but that this is monitored and feedback given. Therefore please can you ensure that your child is accessing Google Classroom, they are completing the work and 'turning it in' (all children have been shown how to do this) so that the teachers can review it and give feedback.

If any families have an issue with access to a device, please contact school so that we can try and help. If families want to purchase a device (which will assist the children right through their education) we recommend a Chromebook (reasonably priced) - if you want any further advice on this please contact Mr Milligan.

### **Important: COVID situation**

Thank you for your lovely comments on our efforts to provide activities for the children at Christmas. We are trying our best to continue, in a safe manner, maintaining the integrity of bubbles. We also need your assistance with this - it has been brought to my attention that some families are still not adhering to lockdown restrictions. All our collective work will be in vain if we don't all work as a team to protect our families, children and the staff. Many contacts will be unavoidable but others are, and we are all learning by experience; please can I ask the following to assist us all in protecting our Christmas period, including that in school:

- If your child is poorly, do not bring them to school; the symptoms keep changing on a regular basis, and as a school we have found that most positive cases have started with cold symptoms. If this is the case, please also keep the sibling off school until we are sure they are negative. I know this incredibly difficult however some closures could have been avoided if this approach had been taken. When a person in the household displays symptoms, all in the household including siblings should self-isolate until you receive a negative test result for COVID.
- Please all follow the lockdown restrictions - it has been brought to my attention that families are still mixing, parents are chatting (not socially distanced) outside the school gates or even in our school car park,

sleepovers are occurring. I know how difficult this is (I haven't seen my parents properly since March due to the nature of my job) but it will go on even longer and our children will miss more education in school if we don't restrict our contacts.

- Please remain patient and not take out any frustrations on the staff (many of the staff are upset, because they too have to self-isolate depending on the source). The majority of parents have been extremely understanding, and know how hard the situation is for us all.
- If in doubt, keep the child(ren) off school, until you are sure they are not positive COVID.

We are learning all the time about transmission and the importance of restricting contact. Parents have asked for clarification on how self-isolation periods are calculated:

- For every COVID case I have to complete a COVID return. This form asks for the date of the start of symptoms or, if asymptomatic, the date of the test. The infectious period is 48 hours prior to this date. So, for example if a child starts with symptoms on a Monday and is absent from school, they have not come into contact with anybody at school for the previous 48 hours (Sat and Sun). If they start on a Tuesday, they have been in contact with people at school on the Monday, and therefore we then have to complete contact tracing and ask the relevant people to self-isolate.
- The last day of contact with an infectious person is counted as Day 1 of self-isolation (until last week it was classed as Day 0!), not the date they take the test or the date we receive the test result. Often it can be a few days between the last date of contact and when the test result is received and consequently when we are informed as a school that the test result is positive. Hence why the self-isolation period can then only appear as 10/11 days.
- The COVID return is sent to Oldham Public Health England, who liaise with myself to ensure that all contacts have been informed and asked to self-isolate.

The Learning Centre pre and after school club is losing a large amount of money due to numbers of pupils self-isolating, and this is causing the future of this facility to be in jeopardy. This is not just a case of protecting people's health, but also our wraparound care provision and people's jobs.

PLEASE trust us - I will not send pupils home if I can avoid it,

PLEASE remember that the staff are working incredibly hard in school and at home often until very late in the evening, and therefore do not deserve receiving abuse or aggression,

PLEASE be as vigilant as possible to protect our school and our school family.

I apologise for the length of this email, but I feel that it is important to provide you with as much information as possible so that we all appreciate the situation we are in.

We have a wonderful school community, which is going through a very difficult and trying time, but if we remain calm, patient and work together, WE WILL get through this.

Kind Regards

Mrs S J Milligan

Twitter: @mrs\_smilligan