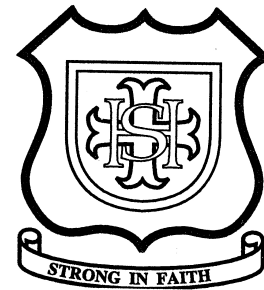


St. Herbert's RC Primary School

Autumn Term

5th November 2021



Dear Children, Parents and Guardians,

First of all, I hope you all had a lovely half-term break, despite the weather! Last term continued to provide challenges, and we thank you for your patience with the various issues we faced.

Please keep our school family in your prayers, as some members of our staff and families face bereavement or serious illness.

We still have a number of COVID cases within our school community, and therefore I ask you to continue to be vigilant. We have had to keep this in mind, as we planned our activities for the next half-term.

Parents' Evening

Parent's Evening will be held on the 17th November via zoom. A separate letter will be issued stating the details.

A quick plea: if you do need to pass messages on to teachers at the beginning of the day, please give them to the teaching staff who are on duty in the playgrounds. Teachers are now supervising children from 8:40am in the classroom, and therefore if they speak to parents, they are not supervising the children. We are there for you and your family, but if you need time with a teacher, please make an appointment to see them so this can be done in private, and where there is time to talk properly.

Charities

Thank you for your VERY GENEROUS donations to our Harvest appeal (Foodbank Friday) last term. All the food has now been distributed to various local families, foodbanks and to The Lally Centre, as chosen by the pupils.

Parish Memorial Mass

Please see a separate letter regarding this service on Monday 15th November.

Parking (REMINDER)

As part of our Health and Safety Risk Assessments last year we did state that parents/carers must not use the staff car park **at any time** (including all pre and after school activities). There are several reasons for this, which all still remain, and I ask that you continue to support us with this. We have requested an extension to our car park for many years, and will continue to present our case for a larger parking area to the Diocese. **Please can you pass this message on to anybody collecting your child(ren).**

Gaming/E-safety

Periodically, it comes to our attention that children are not playing appropriate computer games or watching age-appropriate TV/Films outside of school. This usually comes from the children, and manifests itself in the playing of inappropriate games and/or deterioration in behaviour, during breaks/lunchtimes. As you will know, I have mentioned this in several newsletters over the years.

Recently more and more children are becoming aware of a programme called Squid Games on Netflix, some of which are as young as 5 and 6 yrs of age. They are not necessarily watching it, but it is on at home in the background and they are 'observing' what is going on!! Apparently this programme is 'not very nice' and is in general having a detrimental affect on young people's behaviour and mental wellbeing. I mention this, to raise awareness of this programme, and if you need any support or want to ask questions please contact us.

PE kit

A quick reminder that pupils need to have their PE kit in school; most parents send it in at the beginning of half-term and leave it in school until it needs washing. Children do take part in many physical activities that require their kit eg: dance, Commando Joe, outdoor games, gymnastics. The kit consists of a yellow school PE t-shirt, black shorts and pumps (trainers for outside). We also ask that no earrings are to be worn. Please can I ask that if children are getting their ears pierced, they do so at the beginning of the Summer Holidays, when they will have time to heal properly.

Children can wear a small stud for school, but they must be able to remove it for PE and swimming. It is vital they attend their PE lessons, but health and safety must come first, so no earrings please!

WhatsApp

It has been brought to my attention that there are several parent WhatsApp groups in existence, in relation to our school. WhatsApp is a fantastic app for communicating quickly, and I thank parents for using this resource to remind each other about what is happening at school. We try to keep you informed as much as possible, but we are human and mistakes do occasionally happen. I would ask that WhatsApp is only used in this capacity, and not as a tool to 'complain' about our school – our staff work so hard to provide the best for our children, and it is demoralising to hear that derogatory comments have been made. We will not always 'get it right', but we are trying our best, and if you do have a genuine concern, please come and speak to us first, to allow us the chance to rectify the problem or explain why a certain decision has been made.

Some lovely news

As you probably all now know, Miss Bailey has given birth to a baby boy, Teddy. He arrived five days early, on the 23rd October, and mum and baby are well. We send them our congratulations.

Some more lovely news... Miss Chadderton is expecting her second child in February! Congratulations to the family.

We will update families on who will be covering Class 6 in the new year. Mrs Whatmough will be covering the role of SENDco during Miss Chadderton's maternity leave.

All Diary Dates including the Christmas Period

Please note that all diary dates can be accessed on the school website calendar on www.stherberts.oldham.sch.uk

We have tried to get 'back to normal' as much as possible this year, but with our school specific COVID cases in mind, and with keeping our community safe at the core of our decisions (we are still in the throes of COVID – we are not Post-COVID).

Wednesday 17th November **Parent's Evening (via zoom)**

Monday 6th December **Panto at Middleton Arena – Yr 1-Yr 6 pupils**

Tuesday 7th December **Touring Early Years Panto in school – Nursery and Reception pupils**

Friday 10th December 2:00pm **KS2 Carol Service – in KS2 Playground (weather permitting)**
(Due to the number of pupils we now have in KS2, we cannot hold this event indoors)

We will be **AIMING** to hold our EY and KS1 nativities face to face, as there are smaller numbers of pupils involved, however there are several conditions to this:

- Only two tickets will be allocated to each pupil, to keep the numbers in the audience down, and allow some social distancing. The two tickets can be mum and dad, mum and grandparent, dad and grandparent, two grandparents etc, but only two tickets will be allocated.

- **ALL** members of the audience will be expected to wear a mask – this is to protect staff, children and more importantly yourselves. We still have many people who are anxious about going out in public, and therefore we are doing everything we can to reassure them. No mask, no entry – please support us with this.

All of this is subject to the number of COVID cases nearer the time, and any potential outbreaks we experience. Safety must come first.

Tuesday 14th December 10:00am. Early Years (Nursery and Reception) Nativity
(due to smaller numbers in EY we only require one performance, to minimise risk)

Wednesday 15th December 1:30pm OR Thursday 16th December 9:30am. KS1 Nativity
(two performances to allow social distancing)

Friday 17th December Christmas Jumper and Christmas Lunch Day
(separate letter to follow)

Tuesday 21st December. Christmas Party Afternoon – children will hold their parties in their classrooms; we are hoping Fr Christmas will appear in person in the morning (if circumstances prevent this he will appear via zoom from the North Pole, like last year!)

As per last year, on Christmas Party Day the catering team are going to provide a special lunch for those on dinners, and the children on packed lunches can bring in special items as a one-off treat eg: chocolate, cakes, sweets etc.

Wednesday 22nd December 9:30am or 10:00am: We are hoping to celebrate **Mass**, with Fr Lawrence, however this is to be confirmed nearer the time.

11:00am: Christmas Raffle – tickets will go on sale w/c 6th December £1 a strip and be sold to the children in their bubbles; the draw will take outside in the playground (weather permitting), after Mass.

School closes for Christmas Holidays on **Wednesday 22nd December at 1:30pm** and re-opens **Monday 10th January 2021**.

Your support makes our job much easier, and we thank you for this. As always we will do our best for your children, and we look forward to a wonderful half-term.

Kind Regards

Mrs S J Milligan

Twitter: @mrs_smilligan