



# HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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## Newsletter 460 Friday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2020

What a brilliant first week we've had! It has been wonderful to get back to the 'normal' school routine; I think we have all missed it! The children seem delighted to be back and eager to learn. We have all been saying how lovely it is to see the delight on their faces as they meet their friends and teachers once again. The first week has mainly been spent helping everyone to feel settled as well as embedding the changes to routines we have had to make. The children have all been extremely sensible and no doubt there will be some very tired children (and staff!) this weekend.

### Welcome

We extend a very warm welcome to **Mrs Castle**, our new Year 4 teacher this term. We hope that you will be very happy in our school. We also welcomed back Mrs Mahon and Mrs Barratt who have been working from home since March. It's lovely having you both back in school with us. Quite a few new children have also joined us from other schools - we look forward to getting to know you and your families. Our new Reception and Nursery children will start in the week beginning 21<sup>st</sup> September - the EYFS building work should be completed this week and the classroom ready for the new intake. I will upload some photographs next weekend so you will have a better idea of what has been going on in school over the summer holidays.

### Arriving and departing from school

We feel that our Entry and Exit Plan has worked really well so far, so thank you to the parents, grandparents and carers for thinking of each other and keeping each other safe by observing the social distancing rules. There is a real sense of order and calm which seems to have put everyone at ease. A special thank you to the Year 5 and Year 6 parents for adapting so quickly to using the car park entrance. I am sure most of you have seen, on the news, the rise in confirmed cases in the UK recently, so it is imperative that we all continue to play our part in minimising the risk of spreading the virus. Our focus must be on keeping the staff, the children and their families safe. We have received many positive comments via e-mail and Class dojo about how well we have planned for the children's return, and for this we are very grateful. Please may I ask you to maintain the routines in the weeks ahead and continue to refrain from chatting at the entrances to avoid increasing the number of contacts for all families, including your own.

### Mobile Phones

A gentle reminder that Upper KS2 children must not bring mobile phones to school until further notice. It is important that all parents /carers adhere to our mobile phone policy so that it is fair to all families. We are reviewing our mobile phone policy and will inform you when it is permissible for children to bring their mobile phones into school.

### Forgotten items

Thank you for helping your children to be organised in the mornings. Please continue this fantastic start to the academic year as we endeavour to maintain our bubbles in school - it is not advisable for our office staff to have to deliver various forgotten items to the classrooms.

### Water bottles

The majority of children are arriving at school with water bottles, but sadly I have noticed some children are bringing juice instead of water. We are currently working towards achieving our Healthy Schools Award, so unless there is a very specific reason why your child has to drink juice instead of water, please support us in making it fair to all children. Until further notice, we are happy for your child to have a bottle of sugar free juice for lunch.

### **Ear-ring Policy**

Huge thanks to all parents and carers for adhering to our ear-ring policy. This is the first year we have not had to have difficult conversations with parents about removing a child's ear rings from newly-pierced ears. Thank you.

### **Birthday sweets**

At Holy Family, there has been a long tradition of children bringing sweets to school on their birthday to share with their classmates. We are happy to continue this tradition for the foreseeable future, but due COVID-19 please ensure the treats are individually wrapped within a sealed bag. Thank you for your understanding.

### **Parent Information Sessions**

At the beginning of every year, meetings are organised so that class teachers can share vital information about the year ahead. As we are unable to have large numbers of parents and carers in school, class teachers will share the information via Class Dojo. The curriculum overview for each class for the academic year 2020 – 2021 will be uploaded to the school website by the end of next week.

### **Parent Consultations**

We are trialling a new way of providing this term's parent consultations. Rather than hosting the meetings on two evenings after school, we will have a non-pupil day on **Monday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2020** and the meetings with your child's teachers will take place throughout the day from 8:30am until 5pm. All meetings will be conducted via zoom, or by phone call. Information about how parents/carers can book their time slots will be available from Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September.

### **Class Dojo**

It is important that you let either the office, or your child's class teacher know if you are unable to access Class Dojo; the weekly class homework letter will be uploaded to the Class Dojo class page and it will also be the main means of home/school communication used by class teachers. Tapestry will be used by Mrs Fisher in EYFS and also by some LSAs who are working with children with specific needs.

### **Home reading and homework**

The children will bring home their school reading books on Mondays and will have them changed on Fridays. To ensure the safe transfer of books from home to school and between different children within the class bubble, it is vital that your child brings their books back on Fridays.

### **Providing work for children who have to self-isolate**

Our school has been pro-active in preparing for times when some pupils may have to self-isolate as a result of coming into contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19. If your child has to remain at home please encourage them to log onto the White Rose website where they will have access to the same maths videos being used in school. Your child's teacher will then upload the white rose maths worksheets via Class Dojo. By doing this, your child's return to school will be seamless – they will not have missed any new learning. Other slide shows and worksheets used in class to deliver the curriculum may also be uploaded by the class teacher (similar to what we did during school closure). Your child will also have access to Bug Club for reading and can use their My Maths and TT Rockstars log-ins. **Please be mindful that teachers will be busy planning and delivering lessons in school and it is important they don't have a significant increase in their work load.** There may be days when uploading lessons for home-learning could be delayed.

### **ADMISSIONS - IMPORTANT UPDATE**

If your child is due to start school in September 2021 you will no longer receive a letter from the council inviting you to apply and giving you the relevant opening and closing dates for applications. This is also true if you have a child starting secondary school in September 2021. The onus is on the parent to find out the information themselves - please follow this link for further information: <https://www.essex.gov.uk/admissions-to-essex-schools-for-the-next-school-year>

### **Secondary School Admissions**

The application period for Year 7 secondary admissions for September 2021 opens on **11th September 2020**. Parents should apply online via [www.essex.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.essex.gov.uk/admissions). The statutory national closing date for applications is 31<sup>st</sup> October 2020.

## **First Holy Communion**

Our wonderful team of catechists are busy organising for last year's group to attend revision classes and they will then celebrate the Sacrament of the Eucharist in October. You will receive the dates and all the necessary information from the catechists within the next few weeks. If your child is currently in Year 3 or above and you would like your son/daughter to make their First Holy Communion next year, details for how to request a place will be published shortly.

## **Free School Meal Entitlement (FSM) / Pupil Premium Grant (PPG)**

Since 2014, the Pupil Premium Grant has been available to support children from lower income families and enable them to achieve higher academic grades at school. We are able to check eligibility using a simple, secure and confidential online process. Under the PPG arrangement, schools receive funding for every pupil who meets the criteria for free school meals, so it is important for us to ensure that every child that meets the criteria is actually registered at the school. This will allow us to claim much needed money. Other than our office admin, no one will know whether children are on the FSM register or not. If your KS2 child is awarded a Free School Meal entitlement by Essex County Council, the school will also be entitled to apply to the additional Pupil Premium Funding to help support your child in class.

## **FSM for Reception to Year 2**

Children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are automatically entitled to receive a free school meal. Parents with children in these year groups do not have to apply for this entitlement. However, for low income families, schools are entitled to receive additional funding from Essex County Council (known as Pupil Premium) which can be used to support the children in school.

## **FSM for children in Years 3 - 6**

Please register for Free School Meals if you are in receipt of any of the following benefits:

- ✓ Income Support
- ✓ Income based Jobseeker's Allowance
- ✓ Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit
- ✓ and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- ✓ Pension Guarantee Credit
- ✓ Employment and Support Allowance, income related
- ✓ Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act, 1999
- ✓ Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for
- ✓ Working Tax Credit
- ✓ Universal Credit

## How to Apply

Go online to [Essex County Council Free School Meals Application](#) or apply over the Telephone by calling 0845 603 2200. Even if your child prefers to bring a packed lunch and does not require a school meal, if your child is entitled to FSMs, please apply as it benefits our school budget and allows us to have additional LSA hours in class to support your child.

## **Counselling**

If your child is struggling through a painful experience, or is experiencing anxieties for whatever reason, and you would like any further information on how we could support them, through group play therapy, or individual sessions with a counsellor, please do not hesitate to e-mail me and I will arrange for you to speak to Catherine (our school counsellor) or with an outside agency.

## **Clubs**

The Breakfast and After School Clubs have been running very smoothly all week. There are still some spaces available. Please contact Ms Rita McDowell on **07836 277014**, or e-mail the school office [admin@holyfamily.essex.sch.uk](mailto:admin@holyfamily.essex.sch.uk)

Mr Holmes has been very busy liaising with The Deanes Sports Partnership and has booked the following clubs: Cross Country, Lacrosse, Football Skills and Street Dance. He has also been successful in arranging for Bikeability to take place and we will resume the very popular Ready-4-School Club again for the autumn term.

Due to the current restrictions, only one year group will attend each of the sports club. Detailed risk assessments are available. Mr Holmes will provide all relevant information next week detailing which year group can attend and dates / times of each club.

### **Useful COVID-19 website links**

Stay at home guidance for households with possible coronavirus (COVID-19) infection

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

Stay at home: what to do if you or someone you share your home with has coronavirus symptoms

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/906663/20203007\\_Easy\\_read\\_household\\_isolation\\_v3.1.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/906663/20203007_Easy_read_household_isolation_v3.1.pdf)

Guidance for households with grandparents, parents and children living together where someone is at increased risk or has possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/guidance-for-households-with-grandparents-parents-and-children-living-together-where-someone-is-at-increased-risk-or-has-symptoms-of-coronavirus-cov>

On a final note, thank you all for your unwavering support. We will continue to keep all families and friends in our thoughts and prayers. Have a lovely weekend

God Bless and take care,  
Mrs Hurley