



HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Kents Hill Road, Benfleet, Essex SS7 5PX
Telephone: 01268 792231 Fax: 01268 759274
Email: admin@holyfamily.essex.sch.uk
www.holyfamily.essex.sch.uk



Diocese of
Brentwood

Headteacher Mr P.O'Kane

Newsletter 452 Friday 22nd May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

As the reality of coming out of lockdown continues to be debated, it has been a real challenge processing all the information provided. The reopening of schools has attracted lots of comments and speculation, and I have spent quite some time each day, as new information is released, looking at what it means for our pupils in Holy Family and my colleagues. As much as we deeply miss your children and would love to have them back with us as soon as possible, the priority must be to ensure that they are safe and well when they are with us and also consider the safety and well-being of staff. Guidance is still being issued on an almost daily basis, so we need time to reflect, review and implement the guidance carefully.

Thank you to all who responded to the recent survey and for your really supportive comments which were much appreciated by the staff. I have provided a summary of the responses (as of yesterday evening). A number of families e-mailed to say they are still unsure of their decision about their child returning to school. This is understandable which is why in Holy Family, as well as planning the continuing cover for key worker and vulnerable children, our starting point was to plan for the majority of children in EYFS, Y1 and Y6 returning at some point before the end of the academic year. We therefore have no plans to increase the number of days that children can attend at this time, nor do we know if or when other year groups will be asked to come back to school. Our initial plans for reopening will be reviewed regularly and I will continue to communicate any changes when new information becomes available.

Return to school survey	Nur	Rec	Y1	Y6
% responses	40%	72%	60%	76%
% confirmed returning to school	11%	52%	40%	55%

Following the responses, we now have a clearer idea of how many children will be returning in the first week of June. Once I have collated all the information, I will be able to provide a more detailed update on what the school day will look like for your child. We will endeavour to take into account personal requests for allocation of days, but we hope you understand that almost every family has their own personal story - we must do what we think works best for the majority. My colleagues and I will continue to work hard during half term to get the school ready for the children who will be returning. Our intention is to make the environment as safe as possible without it being too unsettling for them. However, some changes are necessary and the experience for children will not be completely the same as before school closure.

It will be really helpful if you can begin to prepare your children for the return to school; we understand that this will be an anxious time for many children and they will need to be prepared for the fact that it will not be like 'normal' school exactly. Talking to them about trying to keep some distance between themselves and others, washing their hands regularly, how to cough and sneeze into their arm will all help them make a smoother transition back to school. Please also help them understand that they will not be permitted to bring soft toys and pencil cases into school. Their lunch boxes and water bottles are the only items we will permit children to bring in from home.

School Song Project

I hope you enjoyed the final version of the school song project uploaded to the school section of Class Dojo yesterday afternoon. Due to unforeseen circumstances, it may not be what we initially envisaged, but I'd like to extend a very special and massive **THANK YOU to MRS LEWINS** who took on the role of project lead at the last minute to produce such an inspiring and wonderful presentation. Well done Mrs Lewins!

Thank you also to all the children and their parents for submitting such lovely photos, art work and messages of support for the NHS and key workers used in the video. We are sorry that we couldn't use all the videos, but we hope to do something very similar when we are back in school and have the necessary technology available to us. Thank you to Miss Keeble and Mr Stephens for supporting the project and all who worked behind the scenes to help put the presentation together. We are really proud of the children for showing their resilience and positivity through their wonderful smiles and I am proud to be part of such a dedicated and supportive school community

Congratulations

We would like to extend our congratulations to Ronan (Y4) who created this lovely poster for a competition, set by his Dad's work to celebrate the NHS, which he won. He even managed to incorporate his VE Day work too. Well done Ronan!



On-line Learning

Please find attached some of the most recent photos the teachers have selected to provide evidence of activities in which the children have engaged with at home over the past week. Unfortunately, sometimes the photos submitted are too dark to add to the montage of photos I create each week, but please know that every photo and every piece of work is valued. As we come to the end of a half term, a massive **THANK YOU to all parents and carers** for your continued efforts to provide home learning, as well as trying to juggle your work and family responsibilities. Please don't feel you are not doing enough to support your child's learning if you have been unable to print off worksheets at home. Lots of reading, learning number bonds and times tables, using My Maths, Bug Club, TTRockstars and LEXIA (which are all self-marking) and any additional research your child does using the internet is really useful. We love to hear about your children engaging in new skills such as gardening, art, design and technology, science, woodwork, food technology and physical activities - these all enrich your child's learning. I've seen lovely photos this week of children rolling down hills whilst taking long walks through the woods with their families.

This week in school, key worker children worked through their on-line learning tasks set by their class teachers, and also made kites, built fairy doors, made magic potions and sailed little boats on the school pond. Thank you to all our wonderful Holy Family teachers who provided daily on-line learning and to all the fantastic staff who have come into school to provide childcare and support for key worker and vulnerable children and ensured the school site was clean and safe throughout each day. **The children, parents/carers and teachers deserve a rest during half term so there will not be any additional work posted until June 1st.** The following websites are recommended to support children's continued learning at home, but please take a break

Regular daily lessons - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize>

Over 180 video lessons each week on National Oak Academy - <https://www.thenational.academy/>

Storytime daily on Monster phonics <http://bit.ly/3cvcgIM>

Change4life - <https://www.nhs.uk/change4life/activities>

Lonely Planet - <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/kids/activities>

Why not visit the Maths Factor website created by Carole Vorderman <https://www.themathsfactor.com/>

ONLINE SAFETY

Children are spending more time than ever on the internet right now. With home learning taking place online and more free time spent on devices, it is so important that children are safe. The NSPCC have information on how to set up parental controls on a range of different devices and apps. Follow the link below for more information. <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/parental-controls/>

MAY, THE MONTH OF MARY

We are coming to the end of May which is the month in the Church's calendar that is dedicated to Mary, our Mother. In this month of May we ask Mary our mother to pray for us and intercede for us. Thank you to the children who sent in photos of their May Altars. Keep sending your photos of the prayer spaces that you have been creating in your homes during the month of May – I have been collating these for our RE file in school.

Chair of Governors letter

Please find attached Mrs Herridge's letter. I'd like to thank Mrs Herridge and her team of governors for all their support throughout these uncertain times.

Parish Contact Details

Holy Family Catholic Church, 661 High Road, Benfleet, SS7 6SF www.holyfamily-church.co.uk

Parish Priest: Fr Eduard Fartan, eduard.fartan@yahoo.com
priest@holyfamily-church.org

Parish Secretary: Mrs Clare Dempsey office@holyfamily-church.org

Telephone: 01268 792082 or 01268 799649

School is not school without each and every one of you here - we miss the children and I miss the conversations with the adults at the school gate in the morning. We miss the conversations on the playground at the end of every day, so we look forward to welcoming back our EYFS, Year 1 and Year 6 pupils from week commencing 1st June (depending on updates from the government). We wait for the instruction that we can open our doors to more year groups. Until that time comes, please stay safe. Remember we are always here if you need us. If you have any worries, you are struggling to buy food, need prayers or just someone to talk to, please email either admin@holyfamily.essex.sch.uk or senco@holyfamily.essex.sch.uk.

We continue to keep families who are going through a difficult time in our prayers. We are here to help, to serve and to lighten the load when where we can.

God bless,
Mrs N Hurley