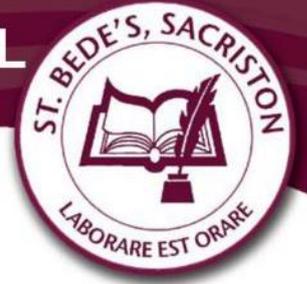


ST. BEDE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Front Street, Sacriston, Durham, DH7 6AB. Tel: 0191 3710272
Email: stbs@stbs.bwcet.com



Mrs S Clarke
Headteacher

10th December 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

As I write to you at the end of another busy week at St Bede's, I would like to begin by offering my sincere thanks to each and every one of you for continuing to support us in our drive to prevent the spread of Covid within our school community. It is apparent, after speaking with other local Headteachers, that we are doing a great job collectively to keep positive cases in our school down and classes open based on the measures we implemented immediately after half term. The same cannot be said for other schools. As a parent myself, I wholly appreciate how frustrating these measures can be at times and know first-hand how difficult it can be when having to collect children, book PCR tests and wait for results before being able to send them back to school. However, I am acutely aware that these measures, as frustrating as they can be, are enabling the ongoing safety of our whole school community and their wider families too.

It is my utmost wish that we continue to operate as we are right up to the end of term on the 22nd and hope that you continue to support us with this.

The main symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are:

- A high temperature
- A new, continuous cough
- A loss or change to your sense of smell or taste

We would ask in the first instance that if your child displays any of these symptoms that you do not send them to school and book a PCR test in-line with government advice.

Children/adults displaying symptoms of Covid or deemed close contact with positive case: in-line with our risk assessment, we would ask that any child/adult in school displaying any symptoms of Covid, or are deemed a close contact of a positive case, we would recommend a PCR test in-line with government advice. We would ask that this result is shared with school at stbs@stbs.bwcet.com so we can help NHS test and trace wherever positive cases arise. **When children do display symptoms in school, we will ask parents to collect their children in order that they can have a PCR test. Children that do display symptoms should not return to school until a negative PCR test result has been received.**

Additionally, we continue to implement recommendations from the Government and Durham County Council's Public Health team and will continue to implement the following measures to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission in school:

- **The use of face coverings** in communal areas for all adults
- To cancel or postpone **educational visits and residential trips**
- **Open days or events** to move to a virtual format
- **PCR testing** for all adults and pupils if they are a close contact of a positive case in their household*
- **We strongly recommend daily LFT testing** at home for 7 days for any adult or pupil in key stage 2 (year 3) or above who is a household contact of a positive case and is exempt from isolation and continues to attend school. The testing of primary age pupils is at parental discretion. Testing should start from the day the household member has symptoms or if they don't have symptoms from when they tested positive*
- Additional attention will be given to **ventilation, cleaning and respiratory and hand hygiene**

We will also continue to monitor local infection rates and reserve the right to reintroduce:

- Staggered **start and finish times**
- **Grouping of pupils** in school by class or year group to reduce mixing
- To cancel or postpone **whole school events** e.g., assemblies

**Note: People who have tested positive with a PCR test within the last 90 days should not be encouraged to test unless they develop new symptoms.*

Visit from our MP regarding traffic

Our School Council met with Mr Kevan Jones (MP) this morning; discussing the very real and ongoing issue of traffic along Front Street and how this is extremely hazardous for our children, families and wider parish community. He was very supportive and is hoping to get the local Council and police out to help look measures to help moving forward. We appreciate how busy he must be and were very grateful to him for giving up his time this morning.

Christmas Lunch & Christmas Jumper Day

On the 15th December, children may come to school wearing Christmas jumpers. We'd ask for a small donation of £1 for this – which must be and via the School Money system. All monies collected on this day will go to Save the Children. We will also be treated to a lovely Christmas lunch on this day – I'm certainly looking forward to that! (Please note that booking for lunches has now passed as we had to put the order in a couple of weeks ago!)

Christmas Parties

These will be held on the following dates:

- KS1 Christmas Party: 16th December 1-3pm
- Class 4 Christmas Party 17th December 1-3pm
- Class 3 Christmas Party 20th December 1-3pm

Our school will provide all children with a small selection of food which will meet all of the children's allergy requirements. Please can your child come into school on their party day wearing their party clothing? They will need to be wearing something that they can also play in outside on the yard.

Book donations

A huge thank you to all of you for donating so many books to our school. These really have been well received and were distributed amongst classrooms by Mrs Jones and the School Council. We are looking into revamping our existing library facility as you know, so will keep you updated on future progress as and when it happens!

End of term

Please note school breaks up on Wednesday 22nd December at 3.20pm for the Christmas holidays and reopens for all children on Monday 10th January.

With every best wish as always,

Mrs Clarke
Headteacher