



Diocese of Portsmouth

ST EDMUND'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

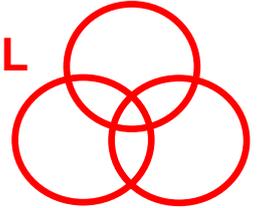
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www.st-edmunds-rc.oxon.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mrs M Delany-White



14th July 2021

Dear Parents,

Difficult times often bring out the best in people.

When looking for a suitable quote to start my final Headteacher newsletter for this academic year I was struck by this one as it sums up everything I have observed within our school community and beyond over the last year. I cannot thank everyone on the staff enough for all they have done for one another and for our wonderful children throughout personally stressful times. It has been really important to us all that your children have been happy and safe at school for as long as possible and we have been successful in achieving this aim through the professionalism and enthusiasm of all the staff. I also wish to thank all parents and family members who have continued to support us throughout. Knowing that you are always there to support us and being greeted by such cheerful smiles on the gate each day (behind your masks of course!) has really helped to keep us all feeling positive, so thank you all!

As you are aware the Government announced yesterday that there will be new Covid guidance from next Monday 19th July. Having read the [first draft of the education guidance](#) this morning I am reassured to read the following:

*At Step 4 we will no longer recommend that it is necessary to keep children in consistent groups ('bubbles'). When we proceed to Step 4, this means that bubbles will not need to be used for any summer provision (for example, summer schools) or **in schools from the autumn term. If your school is still open at Step 4, you may wish to continue with these measures until the end of your summer term.***

Having already discussed the logistics of possibly having to change things onsite for the final three days of term with governors last week, coupled with the rapid increase of cases in Oxfordshire and especially within many local schools within the last few weeks, we have decided that we will continue with our current Covid risk assessment and procedures until we break up next Wednesday. In this way we hope that we will be able to keep every child and adult in school until the very end of term, as the last thing anyone would want is to switch to remote learning and 10 days' isolation at this point in the term. Thank you to all parents who have supported us and taken their child for a PCR test over the last couple of weeks. We are relieved that all results continue to be negative.... so far!

I already have meetings with Public Health England and the Local Authority scheduled for the end of August when we will be discussing the latest situation and government guidance at that point ready for the return to school in September. Currently we are hoping that we will be able to go back to our usual drop off and pick up times, assemblies together in the





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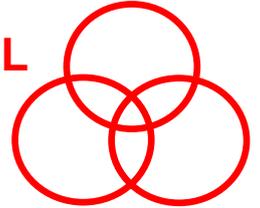
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hall, mixed playtimes and lunch times etc. in the autumn. However, as we know the situation can change rapidly within a few weeks, we will not finalise any of our procedures or fully update our risk assessment until the end of August. Therefore, please look out for information at the beginning of September ready for the **first day of term on Thursday 2nd September** (Monday 6th September for Nursery and Reception classes.)

Meet the New Teacher Day this Friday

Just a reminder that all of the classes will spend the day with their new teacher this Friday 16th July. To save any confusion for parents please drop off your child at the **usual gate and same time as currently**- except for the current Reception class who will be met by their new Year 1 teachers, Mrs Sylvester and Mrs Demain, at the Key Stage 2 gate at 8:40am and can be collected from that gate at 2:55pm. All of the class teachers will be available at the gates at pick up time so do feel free to say hello to them and ask any questions you may have.

Staffing Update

We are pleased to be welcoming Mrs Diana Borzucka who will join our school as a new teaching assistant in September. We are still hoping to recruit another teaching assistant so if you, or someone you know, may be interested please do look at the information on our school website and then request an application pack from Mrs Lomas. We have extended the application deadline to this Friday 16th July at 4pm.

Goodbye and thank you

I am sure all parents will join me in saying goodbye and a heartfelt thank you to Mrs Harris and Mrs Dahle when they both leave us next week. Mrs Harris, we hope you have a long and happy retirement. Mrs Dahle, we are sorry you are leaving Oxfordshire but we are sure you will continue to enthuse your pupils with your infectious love for education and life. Our Year 6 children have thoroughly enjoyed having you as their class teacher since January, thank you.

Goodbye Year 6

Sadly, it's the time of year when we have to say goodbye and good luck to our happiest Year 6 class ever. What a wonderful asset to our school they have been! New parents often ask where our children go when they leave St Edmund's and are slightly confused when I reply 'everywhere'. To clarify this point let me explain that this year's leavers are going to:

Didcot Girls School (1)

Larkmead (6)

Fitzharry's (16)

John Mason (5)

Our Lady's Senior School (2)





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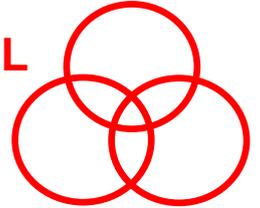
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Magdalen School (1)

I wish them all continued success in their new school, and I am sure they will maintain the high standards of commitment in all that they do. They will face many new challenges in the years ahead but they are more than ready to do so with confidence in the knowledge that they will succeed if they are prepared to put the effort in- as they have done over the years here at St Edmund's. I just hope they remember to keep in touch and share their successes with us in the years to come.

Reports

This week you will receive your child's annual report. Please take the time to discuss this with your child and to praise them for all of their achievements. I ask you to particularly focus on the 'effort' box for each subject as it is only by effort and perseverance that truly great achievements can be accomplished. I have thoroughly enjoyed reading all the class teacher and pupil comments over the last few weeks. The enthusiasm for school life shines out across the school, despite education being currently restricted and interrupted for a long period of time during the lockdown. I have analysed the attainment and progress of the children carefully and class teachers are currently having detailed transition meetings to make sure that the new teachers are fully prepared for each child to enable them to continue on their learning journey in September, whilst focusing on the impact in any key areas or pockets of knowledge the past 18 months may have had. We will certainly be focusing on rebuilding the children's stamina and perseverance in writing across the school next academic year as this is one area which seems to have been effected in every age group. If you want to discuss this report with the class teacher do arrange a time to do so directly via the class email address before we break up.

Uniform

As shops will soon start to advertise sales on school uniform for the next academic year (how depressing for the children to mention this before they have even started their summer holidays) a timely reminder now before anyone goes shopping early may be in order. Please check our full uniform list on our school website: <https://st-edmunds-rc.oxon.sch.uk/information/parentsinformation/school-uniform/> Please particularly note that all trousers and shorts should be grey (not black) and school socks should be grey or navy (grey, navy or white for girls). All sweatshirts and cardigans should be school ones only with our school logo on which are available to buy from the school office; just drop the office an email with your uniform requests and send the money in via your child's book bag and the office staff will send the uniform home with your child at the end of the day. Year 2 parents please be aware that the children will need a white shirt/blouse and school tie in Key Stage 2 and a v neck rather than round neck school sweatshirt.





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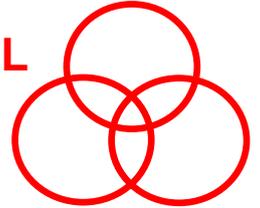
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Jewellery

In the interests of safety and security no jewellery (apart from wristwatches, which must be removed for Physical Education), is allowed in school. If you would like your child to have pierced ears, please do this on the first day of the summer holiday so that the earrings can be easily removed when they return to school in September. Alternatively wait until your child leaves primary school and moves onto secondary school.

Uniform Donations

If your child has out grown their current uniform or is leaving us now, please consider donating any items in good condition to school. It would be particularly useful to have spare red t shirts and navy shorts for PE of all sizes. Similarly, we could do with a few swimming costumes and swimming shorts (any colour) for key stage 2 children who occasionally forget their swimming kit. NB we are hoping that swimming lessons for Year 4 will continue next year; we will send out further details to Year 4 parents in the autumn.

New School Meal Payment system

Over the last few months we have been setting up a new online payment system (a process which is turning out to be much longer and more complicated than we realised!) Please look out for information from the office in the autumn term as we are hoping that you will be able to pay online for school meals, trips etc. next academic year.

Bring learning to life: 50 things to do before you are five

A free app is being launched just in time for the summer. Parents and carers of under-fives in Oxfordshire can now access a list of low and no-cost (local) activities to help promote early language development. With information, guidance and supporting resources, you can build a memory bank of your child's special moments – from playing in the rain (#29 Pitter Patter), building dens (#33 Home from Home) to making potions (#17 Hocus Pocus Potions). Find out more: <https://oxfordshire.50thingstodo.org>

Thank you as always for all your kindness and support throughout another unusual academic year. I look forward to seeing you all again on Thursday September 2nd if not before. In the meantime, I wish you and your family a lovely summer holiday when I hope the sun shines and we all stay fit and healthy.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Delany-White

Headteacher

