



Diocese of Portsmouth

ST EDMUND'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

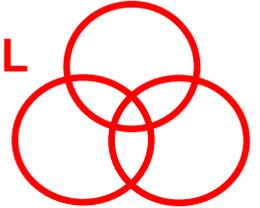
Radley Road, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX14 3PP

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e-mail: office.3856@st-edmunds-rc.oxon.sch.uk

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

Headteacher: Mrs M Delany-White



26th October 2021

"Lasting social and cultural change is spread by ordinary people doing extraordinary things." Eve Ensler

Dear Parents and carers,

I am sure many of you may be sharing my relief in reaching the end of our first half-term of this academic year together – by the end of last week staff and children were all pretty exhausted, after eight long weeks of hard work, with many Covid challenges along the way, but I have been delighted to see how much progress our children have made and that they remain happy and settled and glad to be in school. What particularly struck me this term is the disappointment parents relayed to me from each child who had to self-isolate for 10 days, no matter what age. Thankfully, children who contract Covid are either asymptomatic or unwell for a short period of time and all were keen to return to school as soon as possible, disappointed to be missing their friends, daily routine and the academic, physical, and social challenges that school life brings. I am hoping that the half term break will be a chance for us all to recharge our batteries and will serve as a break in transmission of the Covid virus. Thank you all for being so vigilant and for supporting us in getting your child a PCR test as soon as possible. We were able to trace nearly all transmissions to the home (either children contracting the virus from their older secondary school siblings or from their parents). The few who appeared to contract the virus in school were the staff. Despite being double vaccinated it is apparent that adults working with children do contract the virus so please continue to help us by keeping the high levels of vigilance going through next term as well and keep your child off school whenever they are not well enough to attend.

Parish Climate Sunday



Thank you to Ivy, Amaya, Fearghus, Celeste and Mrs Wadryzk who all helped raise the awareness of St Edmund's parishioners to our work in school during the Climate Mass in church last Sunday.





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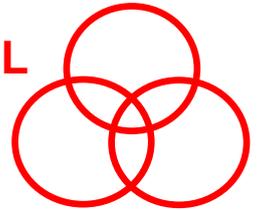
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We pray for an outpouring of God's Holy Spirit on the political leaders meeting at COP26 next week, that God will provide them with the courage necessary to take action on behalf of the environment and the world's poorest.

Thank you also to all our families who so generously gave to our Harvest collection for Abingdon Food Bank. It is going to take several trips to deliver all your generous donations to the Food Bank!



Donations to the Food Bank

If you missed the chance to drop off your donations at school or have more to give, still urgently needed are:

- Long life cow's milk - semi skimmed or whole
- Sugar
- Tinned meat for hot meals (mince, stews, meatballs)
- Dried chickpeas and couscous
- Instant coffee
- Bottles of squash
- Small (500g) bags of sugar
- Cleaning spray
- J cloths (other brands are available)
- Bleach

Donations can be dropped off at the Foodbank on Northcourt Road in Abingdon.

Increase in common childhood infections- Southeast Health Protection Advice to Schools

The Health Protection Team have seen a recent increase in concerns regarding common childhood infections. Infections are being seen in larger numbers than previously and among a wider age range – from infant through to adult. Whilst this increase is unusual, due to the restrictions in place during autumn and winter of 2020/2021 and the reduction in social mixing, people may now be more susceptible to illnesses this year, including many commonly encountered infections. Therefore, the Health Team have written to schools to





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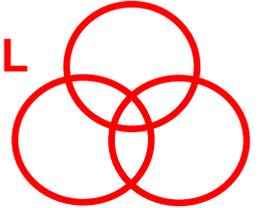
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reassure that whilst there is an increase in cases, the management of these infections remains the same. Please see the following guidance for advice on signs and symptoms, treatment options and exclusion periods:

Please see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities> (Chapter 9 for disease specific information) for the UKHSA guidance.

Please see <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/> for more information about a range of health issues, including infections.

In nurseries and schools, it is recognised that infections can be spread through direct physical contact between children and staff, and through shared contact with surfaces such as tabletops, taps, toys and handles.

The Health Team have also highlighted a few key general hygiene points:

- Hand hygiene – use liquid soap and water followed by method of drying, preferably paper towels
- Increase frequency and enhanced cleaning of key areas, especially bathrooms and all-touch surfaces
- Respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette (Catch It, Bin It, Kill It.)
- Exclude the unwell child or member of staff until well enough to attend

Guidance for Managing Covid 19 impact

Given the disruption during the last few weeks and difficulty in managing staffing levels, following discussions with OCC, the DfE and UK Health Security Agency (formally Public Health England) now that we have gone beyond the threshold of the number of positive Covid cases within a 10-day period, we are aiming to put the following extra measures in place after half term until we see our numbers drop again:

- Recommended social isolation for any close contacts or household contacts of those testing positive until they receive a negative PCR test result. *Please remember to forward all PCR results to the office (negative or positive) for our records*
- Social isolation for siblings of positive cases until they have a negative PCR test
- Creation of COVID-19 secure groups (we will maintain the limit of only two classes mixing by delaying the start of after school clubs and assemblies) *NB the WR Soccer lunchtime and after school clubs that have already stated are run for Years 5 & 6 or Years 3 & 4 only so will continue for now.*
- Encourage **all adults to wear masks at drop off and pick-up and only one adult to drop off or pick up**. We will keep the timings and the use of gates as they are for now, especially as all adults are able to social distance more easily with the use of the playgrounds to wait in at pick up.





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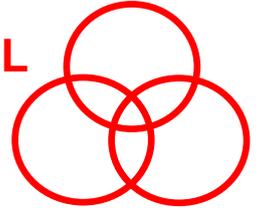
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First Holy Communion 2022

There will be a meeting, in the church on Thursday 18th November at 7.30pm, for parents to enrol their children on the 2022 programme. It is essential that parents attend the meeting to receive enrolment forms and a copy of the programme, which may need to be adapted depending on numbers. If you have any enquiries, please contact Errol Midwinter on 01235 522679.

Year 7 applications closing soon!

There are only a few days left to submit your child's application for Secondary school online at: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/secondaryadmissions The deadline for receipt of completed applications is **31st October 2021**.

Parents Evenings

You should have received a link for your child's parents evening appointment from the class teacher for the first week after half term. Do please take the opportunity to discuss your child's progress and celebrate all that they are achieving, as well as to ask the teacher how you can support them as needed at home. All meetings will be held online via Microsoft Teams, but we are hoping that later in the year (Covid allowing) we will be able to invite you into school to see the children's work. Any questions about parents evening, please contact the class teacher directly via the class email address.

Staying Warm in School

As the weather is changing now, please make sure that your child is wearing the winter uniform and that they remember their named coat and school jumper each day. As we continue to keep the classroom windows and doors open to aid ventilation, as part of our Covid risk assessment, you may want to make sure that your child is wearing a vest or extra layer under their uniform as the weather becomes colder. I know several parents have already been out to buy thermals for their child!

I hope you and your family have a happy and healthy half term break and look forward to seeing you all again next Monday 1st November.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Delany-White

Headteacher

