



ARCHDIOCESE OF BIRMINGHAM
ST. MARGARET MARY'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL
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Week beginning Monday November 23rd 2020

Thought for the week:

“The best things in life aren't things”

Dear Parents,

Sacramental Programme 2020-2021. Before half term, we managed to get half of Y4 to make their First Holy Communion. Sadly, the new restrictions that we are currently living under has meant the other half will have to exercise further patience. As it stands today, I suspect we may be entering the spring of 2021 before we will be able to proceed. I am very grateful to the families concerned for their understanding and to Father Simon for his help in trying to steer a path through what is a very difficult situation for all of us.

As I write this letter, I am also unaware if we will be able to have First Confessions for the current Y3 this side of Christmas. We had originally thought that this could take place in December however I am not sure if this will be able to go ahead. We may have to reschedule the Sacrament of Reconciliation to the spring term. I will meet with Mr Barton and Father Simon, wait and see where we are concerning any restrictions, and make a decision. As soon as I know for definite, what we can or cannot do I will write to all concerned. In the meantime to Y3 and Y4 thank you for your patience and understanding.

FSM Vouchers 2020. I am indebted to Mrs Coney (despite having to work from home) and Mr Connaughton for organising the vouchers for those entitled. By now, you should have received all the information you need, if you think you are due a voucher and haven't received one please contact school.

Coronavirus. I look forward to welcoming Y4 back on Tuesday (24th) many thanks to all the Y4 families for their support with self-isolating, work for Y4 can continue to be accessed via the year group Twitter feed.

We have had an increase in adults testing positive this week. Those families are now self-isolating. Please can I stress the need to be aware of social distancing from each other when dropping and collecting the children at school. Please do not linger around the school gates and please be conscious of the need for all of us to remain socially distanced unless and until the situation eases. Your support with this matter is ESSENTIAL to help reduce the risk of the virus spreading and year groups potentially having to close.



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A checklist/reminder of What to do if your child develops symptoms of COVID 19

If your child develops symptoms of COVID-19, they must not come to school and should remain at home for at least **10 days** from the date when their symptoms appeared. Anyone with symptoms will be eligible for testing and this can be arranged via <https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test> or by calling 119.

All other household members who remain well, must stay at home and not leave the house for 14 days. This includes anyone in your 'Support Bubble'.

Further information is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

The 14-day period starts from the day when the first person in the house became ill.

Household members should not go to work, school or public areas and exercise should be taken within the home.

If you require help with buying groceries, other shopping or picking up medication, or walking a dog, you should ask friends or family. Alternatively, you can order your shopping online and medication by phone or online.

Household members staying at home for 14 days will greatly reduce the overall amount of infection the household could pass on to others in the community

If you are able, move any vulnerable individuals (such as the elderly and those with underlying health conditions) out of your home, to stay with friends or family for the duration of the home isolation period.

Symptoms

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

Anti-Bullying Week. There is no legal definition of bullying however; it is by common consent behaviour that is intended to hurt someone physically or emotionally. It also behaviour that is repeated over a sustained period. It can take many forms, rough/physical play; teasing, cyber bullying and name-calling are just some examples. In essence, it is deliberate behaviour over a sustained period of time. Cyber bullying in particular today seems to be on the increase for both children and adults.

Despite having to work from home Mrs Coates has organised a number of activities across school to mark Anti Bullying Week. I am very grateful to Mrs Coates, as organising activities for school from home is not easy. Evidence of the work the children have been doing can be found on a Twitter feed, indeed Y2 wrote about "how they could play their part to unite against bullying" and they are right in using the word "unite". Effective action against or for anything is always more productive if it is done together and in partnership. Thank you to everyone for all their hard work in marking Anti Bullying week and re enforcing the message that St Margaret Marys is a "TELLING SCHOOL".

Diwali 2020. Diwali is a festival of lights and one of the major festivals celebrated by Hindus, Jains and Sikhs. The festival usually lasts five days and we marked the Festival of Light earlier this week with some lovely activities in class. Thank you to everyone for their hard work

Half term dates. School will break up for the Christmas holiday at **1:00pm on Friday December 18th. The children return to school on Monday January 4th 2021.**

St Margaret Marys Church. During this period of national restrictions, no church services can take place. Please however note that the church is open for private prayer on the following days at the relevant times:



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“Church will be open at these times for individual prayer, which will include Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, Rosary and Confessions: Sunday 9am- 11.30am Monday 6pm-7pm Tuesday 8.45am-9.45am Wednesday 8.45am -9.45am Friday 8.45am – 9.45am Saturday 6pm – 7pm”.

Mr Peter Duffy. Mr Duffy officially retired from his post of Building Services Manager last Friday. Peter has been a part of St Margaret Marys since August 1988 and has served our school community throughout many changes both in personnel and in the fabric of the building. Mr Duffy has worked with three Head teachers and a number of governing bodies. Peter has been here throughout my time at St Margaret Marys and as he moves on to the next stage in his life I want to wish him well. On behalf of everyone, I would like to wish Pete and Maureen all the best for a long and happy retirement.

Please pray for: Please pray for the family of Joyce Anderson whose anniversary we are approaching. Joyce was a great friend of our school and her daughter Christine is an ex chair of governors.

Many thanks for your continued support and cooperation.

M Aldred. Head teacher.



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