



School Newsletter

With Christ, we live, love, learn and grow

25.06.21

Dear parents/ carers,

COVID UPDATE

1 Sports Days

Last week, there was a communication from the DfE to all schools giving advice that schools could consider putting on sports days. The idea would be that children stay in their bubbles and spectators can gather in groups of up to 30. I know that many of you must be wondering what St Mary's position is on this.

I am sorry to say we are not going to have a traditional sports day where we invite parents this year. I know this will disappoint many of the parents and children but I hope you will understand why.

While the advice about sports days is for all schools in England in general, the rate of COVID infection in Chorley and Lancashire in particular is five times higher than the national average. Chorley had 351 cases per 100,000 people in the latest week 15 Jun-21 Jun. The average area in England had 73.

The recent increase in cases locally has impacted most schools in Chorley, for example two of our local high schools have been closed over recent weeks and two primary schools have closed this week. We, ourselves, had to close the Y4 bubble this week and our Y6 bubble will be closed next week.

As we have been doing all the way through the COVID pandemic we want to err on the side of caution. I do not want children, their families or staff to have to miss any more time off school or to have to self-isolate during the beginning of the summer holiday.

When we were planning our annual health week we did so under the assumption it would be without parents attending. Mr Hodge has made extensive plans for the children to enjoy a fantastic week of sports and health activities from 5th – 9th July.

I hope you understand my decision and let us hope that this time next year we can put on our sports days as normal and invite you in to enjoy them.

2 Y6 Bubble closure

Unfortunately, another class had to close this week due to a positive COVID case. The Y6 children have moved immediately to remote learning. All being well, they will all return to school on Monday 5th July. Thank you to the Y6 team: Mr Cahalin and Mrs St John for getting the remote learning up and ready so quickly. Thank you to the Y6 parents and carers for your support and cooperation too.

I thought it would be worth sharing the following with you if, in the unfortunate event, we have further positive cases in school. In summary, we would give you this information:

- I. That the bubble of children are asked to self-isolate for a period of 10 days. (Household members are not asked to self-isolate unless asked to do so separately).
- II. Advice on what to do if your child develops COVID symptoms during period of self-isolation.
- III. To request that you arrange for PCR tests (not lateral flow) for your child and all household members.

3 What to do if a member of your household tests positive for COVID over a weekend?

We would be very grateful if you could inform school if, in the unfortunate event, your child tests positive for COVID during any of the next few weekends, so that we can make arrangements for the rest of the class who would then need to self-isolate on the Monday. To contact us. Please email office@chorleystmarys.lancs.sch.uk . This email account will be monitored over the weekends.

If another member of your household tests positive over any weekend so that your child needs to self-isolate on a Monday, please let school know on the Monday.

4 Letter from Dr Sakthi Karunanithi, Director of Public Health to parents and carers

Dr Sakthi Karunanithi has written a letter to all parents and carers this week (see letter attached – this has previously been sent out on GroupCall). In it, he recommends that all adults take up the opportunity to have two doses of a COVID vaccine and he encourages us to take a PCR test in addition to the LFD tests.

‘As well as this, everyone in Lancashire, including children, are being strongly encouraged to take a Covid-19 PCR test especially in outbreak situations. People should in the meantime continue to make use of free twice-weekly rapid tests, commonly known as lateral flow devices.’

5 COVID Lateral Flow Device tests

A reminder that anyone in Lancashire is eligible to access free, rapid coronavirus tests for themselves and their families to use twice a week.

These can be obtained locally from **Woodlands Conference Centre** (opposite Parklands School), from the **Tesco Extra supermarket** on Foxhole Road, **Lloyds Pharmacy** on Devonshire Road and from The Hub pharmacy on Peel Street.

End of year gifts

Mrs Wilson has told me that a number of parents have been asking what the school is doing about end of year gifts for staff this year. Please do not feel that there is any pressure or that there is any

expectation from school to get gifts for staff members; there is none whatsoever. Staff members are doing the job that they are paid to do. That said, I know, like anyone, that they do appreciate a kind word, whether spoken in person or put in an email, a card or on Class Dojo (but there's no expectation of that either!).

However, regardless of what I say, some of you will want to give a gift anyway. If that is the case, then that's fine too because the staff members can quarantine items in their rooms.

Attendance



Chorley, St Mary's Attendance League 2020/2021



CURRENT POSITION	CLASS	CURRENT %
1st	YEAR 3	99.00
2nd	YEAR 1	98.80
3rd	RECEPTION	98.58
4th	YEAR 2	98.53
5th	YEAR 4	97.96
6th	YEAR 5	96.43

w/e 25.06.21 congratulations to **Y5** on their **100%** attendance this week.

Stars of the Week - 25.06.21

Class	Name	Star of the Week for ...
YN	Lilah	For doing excellent home reading
YR	Rebecca	For trying so hard with her phonics
Y1	Hannah	For her beautifully fluent reading.
Y2	Oscar	A beautiful descriptive piece of writing about the seaside
Y3	Emily, Seb, Jacob, Ella and Phoebe C	Excellent effort in reading assessments this week.
Y4	All the year 4 class	Year 4 have worked extremely hard this week with their home learning. Mrs Banwell has been impressed by the quality of their work in all subjects, 'I am very proud of them all.'
Y5	Sienna	For her wonderful effort and dedication in reading comprehension.
Y6	Sam T	Using both formal and informal language in his letter writing this week.

Free School Meals – Are you missing out?

Free School Meal Eligibility and Pupil Premium Funding

Because all children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are entitled to a free school meal, many parents do not realise that they might be entitled to something called **free school meal eligibility**. And we understand why this might be the case because the system is confusing! At St Mary's, we have noticed a fall in the number of infant children whose parents have claimed eligibility since the introduction of free school meals for all infants – other schools have noticed the same.

This free school meal eligibility can be applied for in Reception, Year 1 and in Year 2 even though children are receiving a school meal anyway. And parents in Y3, 4, 5 and 6 can also apply.

Why bother applying if your child is receiving a free meal anyway?

If you think you might be eligible it is very much worth applying for two reasons:

1. Your child will continue to receive free school meals on leaving the infants in Y3, Y4, Y5 and Y6 and beyond
2. The school receives additional money (pupil premium) for children eligible for free school meals (over £1 300 per pupil).

If you receive any of the benefits below, St Mary's School can access this extra funding, called pupil premium.

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit

How can you find out if you are eligible?

Apply by phone – and you can find out in a matter of minutes!

You can ring the local **Free School Meals and Pupil Premium team on 01772 531809**

It must be the person claiming the benefit that rings.

You will need to provide your:

- Name

- Date of birth
- National insurance number

They will confirm whether you are entitled over the telephone.

Apply by post

Download the application form from <http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/schools/free-school-meals.aspx> and return it to your local area education office.

South Area Education Office

Level 1 Christ Church Precinct

County Hall

Preston

PR1 8RJ

Free milk If you receive benefits, your child could also get free milk. Contact us to find out what arrangements we make for school milk.

With open events not possible in person, we have decided to publish a video which offers an insight into the training course and our offer to Associate Teachers. We will put this all over our social media platforms and advertise on Facebook shortly.

Yarrow Teaching School
Alliance
Open Event:
Tuesday 1st December 7pm



This Autumn, with face to face open evenings not possible, the Yarrow Teaching School Alliance invite you to a zoom open event. Have questions about our Initial Teacher Training Course answered, meet the team and see an Alliance school. email a.hitchen@st-georges.lancs.sch.uk to RSVP and receive log in details

<http://www.yarrowteachingschoolalliance.co.uk> @YarrowTSA

St Mary's is part of the Yarrow Teaching School Alliance. If you have a degree and interested in becoming a primary school teacher, visit the website above. **P Smyth 25.06.21**