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Update letter to parents (4) in response to Lockdown. February 2021

Dear Parents,

Key Worker provision. “If you can stay at home you MUST stay at home”

The country reached a significant milestone this week, a milestone so grim its barely imaginable. 100 000 people have now succumbed to this disease and the numbers show very little sign of slowing down. There are still a significant number of people in our city and country that are getting poorly with this illness and that is why, I have to keep repeating the mantra that if you can stay at home you must stay at home.

This week has seen the governors and I take the unprecedeted step of having to close the school site. I spoke at length to officials from the local authority and Public Health that all advised me to keep school closed to everyone. The nature of the outbreak in school resulted in a number of key staff having to self-isolate, as a result opening school would not have been safe. I was also told that closing school for the week would also help enormously in stopping the spread of the virus. Thankfully, people are recovering, the period of self-isolation ends on Monday and school can open again for key workers on Tuesday February 2nd.

To try and help families I contacted the Headteacher at Christ the King and asked for their help with our key worker families. I am extremely grateful to Mrs Breslin for allowing some of our children to attend their site this week. To those families that used the facility I hope it helped ease your situation.

The key worker provision will finish on Thursday February 11th for half term. On Friday 12th the school will be getting a “deep clean” and hence will be closed to all pupils.

If your child/children are poorly, please keep them at home and of course if they have any symptoms of Coronavirus please seek a test.

Home Learning. Thank you for continuing to engage with the home learning in whatever way you can. There have been some wonderful examples of work going on at home and school is very grateful for your support with this matter. I repeat again what I wrote last week that the expectation is to do what you can when you can and nothing more.

Free School Meals. The vouchers are now available for those entitled to receive them. As I write just under 80% of families have already managed to access their voucher via an email that



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will have been sent to them from Edenred. The government announced this week that the vouchers will continue on until we get back to school (including over half term). As soon as I have the details I will get them out to those concerned. The guidance is on the website and of course the school office will be back open on Tuesday, if anyone has a query simply call 464 6355.

Return to school. The government announced that sadly the earliest we can expect to return to school will be March 8th. No one is more disappointed with this decision than myself, the children need to be back, but only when its safe to do so. The details of the return to school are nothing more than an arbitrary date in March. I don't know if we will all return, if certain year groups will return, if we will return full time or part time. As soon as the details are released I will share them with you, the 22nd February has been mentioned as a date when more details will be given. I can only assume that the return will depend on the figures for infections, hospitalisations and sadly deaths in the city and the country. We must all continue of doing our bit of staying at home, washing our hands, not touching our face and keeping two metres apart from one another. The more we do this the sooner EVERYONE can get back to school where they belong.

Contact Details. A further reminder that more than ever it is **ESSENTIAL** that school has the correct contact details. I am still being informed that some families are not receiving e mails in particular. As a method of communication whether it be updates, newsletters, vouchers or sharing information an up to date e mail address is essential. If you are not receiving e mails, **PLEASE CONTACT THE OFFICE** and they will help sort out the situation for you. These are extremely challenging times for all of us and the situation is constantly changing sometimes on a daily basis so the need to stay in contact is crucial.

Sacramental Programme 2021. Due to recent events it has not been possible to meet with Father Simon to clarify dates and times for First Holy Communion and First Confession. Both Father and I aim to meet this week and confirm all the dates that people need.

Half Term 2021. School will close at 3:00pm on Thursday February 11th, reopening for key worker families on Monday February 22nd.

Please pray for: Everyone in our school family that we can stay safe. Please also pray for Philip Fisher RIP. Philip was the husband of Betty who worked for many years at St Margaret Marys, mainly in the school office. Some of you may remember Betty and I know she would be grateful of your prayers at this sad time for the Fisher family.

Many thanks to everyone for their understanding, support and patience, especially this week, it is much appreciated.

Mr Aldred Head teacher.



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