



St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Dipton

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Headteacher: Mrs J Burgess

We follow in Christ's footsteps

Tuesday 30th November 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

Christmas Update

As stated in one of my previous letters, I would like to provide a further update regarding the range of Christmas activities planned over the coming weeks.

You will, of course, be aware that we have had to revert to bubbles due to the high numbers of COVID cases we have experienced in school this half term. A large number of staff and pupils has been affected and we still have a number of pupil absences.

Due to the amount of positive cases throughout school, our bubble situation cannot ease across school until we have a 14-day gap from the last positive case in specific year groups. This is going to take us into December and we are still awaiting some PCR results. We have therefore been advised to maintain the bubble system until the end of term.

After considering our own situation, and with further advice from Public Health (with whom we have been in regular contact), we have decided to present our Christmas performances via video. I know you will understand our reasoning but I fully appreciate there will also be disappointment. We have seen first-hand how quickly transmission can spread and we want to keep as many of our pupils in school as possible. Furthermore, as some of our performances were due to take place next week, with the amount of extended disruption and absence, it has been impossible to prepare classes in such a short space of time. We want to give our staff and pupils time to create a special memory for you to cherish and enjoy. As these events take a little practice, we have altered the timescale of performances accordingly.

All the following performances will now be released via video by Thursday 16th December (rather than original dates on our school 'Diary of Events'):

- Reception Nativity
- Y1 and Y2 Nativity/Christmas liturgy
- Y3 and Y4 Liturgical dance
- Y5 and Y6 Carol Service

Video links will be sent via email. We are not able to give any parent permission to share on social media.

It is with further regret that we have also take the decision to cancel our planned trip to Northern Stage to see The Sorcerer's Apprentice. We are grateful to both the venue and the travel company for allowing this late change without cost to our school. It is a difficult time for all these companies too! Any theatre payments families have already made will be refunded to ParentPay accounts over the next few weeks. We will do our best to arrange a theatre trip in the new year to make up for this!

We will make sure our children have their Christmas party – although it may be a class-based event. We will have to see what our position is nearer the time. I know staff will ensure children have as much fun as possible. Please make your £2.00 contribution via ParentPay.

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Pupils' Christmas Cards

Our team of pupil Eco-Warriors met yesterday and a decision was shared with all pupils regarding a new approach to Christmas cards. Pupils decided they want St Patrick's to be eco-friendlier.

Pupils came up with the idea of a 'Secret Santa' style Christmas card. The idea is each pupil will pick the name of one other classmate out of a Santa hat (no other type of hat will be acceptable 😊). They will then make a Christmas card in school with recyclable materials only. Other children will then sign the card. If your child has already written out cards, we are happy for these to be distributed. If cards, have not been written this will save pupils (and sometimes parents) an extra job and will show we are introducing the little changes we can to help our planet.

All children will still make a second card for home.

Other activities within school

If the projected end dates of self-isolation remain without additional cases, our Y5 class should be able to return to their swimming lessons for their final week (9/12/21). The final Thursday (16/12/21) is party day so our pupils will not attend swimming that day.

Tom, our PE coach from NUFC, should be able to return next week as he works with individual year group bubbles. Unfortunately, we cannot resume after school clubs for the remainder of this term as clubs have mixed ages. Moving forward, we will take this into consideration when planning after-school programmes to ensure they are sustainable.

Drop-off and collection

Please arrive in the yard for your allocated time to avoid congestion. When waiting for siblings, please keep children close to you and do not allow them to play in the yard. Apologies for our late exit yesterday. All children were involved in an online Advent liturgy which overran.

Playground Pals

We have had a huge number of applicants for our playground pal positions. Thank you so much to everyone who applied. I was very impressed by what I read. It is great to see how committed pupils are to ensuring playtimes and lunchtimes are both fun and safe for everyone.

Anti-bullying and Behaviour Surveys

Thank you to all those parents and pupils who have already provided a response. When you have the opportunity, please remember to complete our on-line surveys, following the links below:

[Parent Survey](#)

[Pupil Survey](#)

I know our approach to the next few weeks may be different to other schools in our locality, but all our decisions need to be driven by our own situation, and are made in consultation with the Chair of Governors and Public Health.

We remain optimistic that this situation will continue to improve and I would like to express my sincere thanks to staff, pupils and parents for the resilience shown.

Kind regards

Mrs Burgess
Headteacher

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