



5<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents and carers,

Firstly, Happy New Year to you and all of your families, I hope you have all managed to stay as safe as possible during this difficult time.

This was certainly not how I had planned to welcome you all back after the Christmas holidays. However, following on from the news late last night from the Prime Minister that schools have to close their doors to all but the children of Critical Workers and our most vulnerable pupils, staff have spent today sorting out learning packs and online learning plans for all pupils. Those pupils attending school will be taught a mirror image of the plans which are being uploaded to support parents, so that provision of entitlement is the same for all of our pupils.

Please be assured that whilst I agree that for the safety of all of our children, staff and parents we all need to work together to limit the spread of this awful virus, I also recognise the challenge and difficulty 'home learning' presents to lots of our families. As such I have put the following support in place, starting on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January:

1. The whole school Risk Assessment has been reviewed
2. All parents and carers for the children who have an allocated place have been contacted by text informing them of their place
3. All children attending school must do so wearing their full school uniform
4. Please use current entrance times starting on Wed 6<sup>th</sup>, which were in place last term
5. The kitchen will be providing hot meals starting on Wed 6<sup>th</sup> for any pupils who have chosen to have one – home packed lunches can also be brought into school if desired
6. Teachers have put together a pack of resources for all the children working from home, we put an urgent order in for new books and pencils for all children last night so they should arrive in school tomorrow. Staff have kindly agreed that as packs are completed, this week they will go out in pairs and deliver them to your door steps. Please be patient as the whole country is ordering new resources to share with their pupils!
7. Tonight (5.01.2021), teaching and learning plans will be uploaded as a timetable for each year group with a suggested timetable for daily lessons and activities with websites, PPT's and resources to back everything up for you to use at home, this week
8. Next week's lessons will all be uploaded onto the school website by 9am on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2021
9. From then on all teaching timetables and learning resources will be uploaded by 12noon each Friday for the following week

10. There will be extra resources uploaded on a weekly basis, from the school Chaplin, to support you spending some prayerful and spiritual time with your families
11. There will be extra music resources and plans uploaded by our music specialist, to help you bring some of the joy of music back into your homes and lives
12. There are going to be RE lessons set every week, as a Catholic school, this is at the core of what we do and believe.
13. Over the next few weeks' staff will be learning how to use a variety of online teaching and learning platforms. These are aimed at improving and enhancing the way we share information with you during this ongoing lockdown – I hope to have these up and running as quickly as possible
14. As a school, the whole school website will be reviewed and updated over the coming months to improve your experience and ability to find information
15. I am planning on setting up a whole school Facebook page to enable pupils and parents to celebrate the wonderful things your children are doing – hopefully it will also give you the chance to delight in everything they learn and see in school
16. Starting on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January, all families of pupils not attending school in person will receive a weekly phone call from a teacher to support parents and children with their home learning, if you need anything please do not hesitate to ask
17. Meanwhile, of course school will be open every day, you are all able to ring school (0191 2672233) to ask for any support and I will do anything I am able to help you. You can email school [admin@stjohnvianney.newcastle.sch.uk](mailto:admin@stjohnvianney.newcastle.sch.uk) and we will reply as quickly as we are able to do so
18. Every member of staff will be in school and they are ready and willing to help you with any online learning queries you have.
19. FSM vouchers are being coordinated by Mrs McDine through Newcastle Council, as you will know every school is trying to get their allocation quickly. She will inform you all of when they arrive and can be distributed

As you can imagine, staff spent Monday getting everything ready for all pupils to return and then today changing all those plans to help you at home instead. I understand that at this time of very real uncertainty, life is difficult, but I also ask that you also be patient, staff are working flat out to make sure you all get the best experience possible. As I am sure you all appreciate during such a turbulent time, sometimes things go wrong, please speak to school and I will do everything I can to help.

I will try and write at least one letter a week to keep you all up to date and informed, however I appreciate your patience.

I continue to keep you and all of your families in my thoughts and prayers and pray that this pandemic will finally come to a conclusion and we can all get back to a semblance of normality.

Mrs A. D. Thorpe  
Head teacher

