

29th January 2021

Dear Parent & Carer,

COVID 19 Update

Thank you

Thank you for all your support helping your children with their learning, both in school and whilst at home. Thank you too for the many positive emails and calls you've sent about the school's efforts to keep children engaged and happy. It's a really difficult time for everyone; your support means a lot and I hope you know that we are here for you, at any time, for whatever you need.

COVID Cases

Public Health England have confirmed that Bolton is currently experiencing extremely high numbers of cases in schools, due to Christmas mixing and increased transmission of the new strain. Our school family is bigger than most. When it's fully occupied we have more than 640 pupils in school and 113 members of staff in the teaching and support team.

The Government's lockdown restrictions mean that we currently have around 240 children on site, organised into small groups called 'bubbles'. At present, we have two pupils at school who have tested positive for COVID as well as ten of our staff.

As you'd expect we're providing all the support we can for these families, and we wish them a speedy recovery. We are following the Government's guidance, which has meant we have had to close bubbles in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. We will be welcoming our Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 bubbles back on Monday 1st February and our Nursery bubble back on Monday 8th February.

If we have any other confirmed cases, we will contact you directly to let you know if bubbles have to close, or any children are required to isolate. It's tough, but if we follow the guidance, that'll mean we're doing everything we can to stop the virus from spreading.

Safety Measures

From the beginning we have been following the Government's guidance to the letter. Senior members of staff are responsible for making sure all the required safety measures are being taken. We started the new 'lateral flow' testing of staff this week, which should help us identify any staff who may have COVID but don't have symptoms. This will help us to keep transmission and disruption to a minimum.

The school is being cleaned regularly and we have organised a deep clean this weekend.

Learning, Caring, Growing Together

Head of School: Mrs S. Rostron

St Bede Primary Academy, Morris Green Lane, Bolton, BL3 3LJ

Telephone: 01204 61899 Website: www.stbedeacademy.org Company Registered Number: 07628909

Home Learning

After safety, the quality of education is our next priority. Home learning packs have been delivered and teachers are presenting video lessons tailored to the needs of each class, which can be watched live or viewed later. Each family receives a weekly call from their class teacher, to answer any questions and solve any issues.

Every child in Years 4 to 6 has access to a tablet, and we have sent laptops to children in other year groups who need them. The technical team at the school has a helpline for you to call to help you access online learning (01204 328995); we've answered more than 80 calls so far.

Nine out of ten children have been able to access all of this support, but we still have a few families who need some assistance, so we are working directly with them. If you have any difficulty accessing any of the remote learning we're providing, please don't worry, just drop us a line.

Better News

I know that many of you have had older relatives who have received the first dose of the vaccine. This must be a huge relief to many of you. There are better times ahead, and it is important to reassure your children of that.

Beyond that, please do not put too much pressure on yourselves, or worry about whether you are doing enough to keep your children learning. As soon as the Government lets us know that we're permitted to return to face-to-face teaching, it is our job to pick up on any lost-learning your children have had. We'll dedicate ourselves to that effort, not just for the remainder of this year, but every day your children are pupils here.

Our St. Bede family, including our children, staff and parents/carers have been amazing. Thank you for your resilience.

Look after yourselves and be kind to one another. Thank you!

Kind regards

Mrs S Rostron & Mrs A Black
Co-Heads of School

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