

**SACRED HEART RC NURSERY AND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Head teacher: Mrs Nichola Day



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Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents / Carers,

I hope that you are all well and coping with the many challenges of remote learning. Thank you for all that you are doing to support your children with their education at home. We know that this isn't always easy, particularly for those of you who are trying to work from home simultaneously. Staff are keeping a daily log of correspondence with parents so I am kept up to date with who is (and isn't) engaging with the work and any issues that have arisen.

As we enter the second week of lockdown, we are dealing with further requests from parents for key worker places. We presently have just under a hundred children (99) in a 'closed' school so are operating at 45%. To put things into perspective, during the first half term of lockdown one, our highest days were 32 pupils. This was the highest number of children in any Plymouth CAST school and the majority of Torbay schools, despite some of the schools being double/triple our size. All our classes are now in double figures. We continue to operate from a robust risk assessment with many mitigations in place but as you can imagine, with such numbers operating teaching in class (safely) whilst simultaneously delivering remote education for those pupils at home is proving a challenge.

Feedback from parents has been varied. Many parents are concerned with the volume of work being received and that they cannot get through it, yet two parents are concerned that there is not enough. Everyone's situation is completely different so it is impossible for us to please everyone all of the time. Each school situation is also completely different. Where teachers have little or no pupils in school, live lessons maybe appropriate; they are not appropriate here. The pre-recorded lesson we are offering provides more flexibility for families at home. There is no requirement to be in a certain place at a certain time and lessons can be paused or rewind meaning pupils can learn at their own pace. Families with multiple children find live lessons a logistical nightmare.

Staff are ringing parents of those children not engaging on a daily basis. This is for support not to chastise. Once again, we know how difficult this is for some of you. This is to try and work through any issues that you are facing to make remote learning work for you, your child and your personal circumstances. That said, the expectation remains that 'education is not an option'. All children who are not in school are expected to log in, register, complete work to their best standard and then hand it in via Google Classroom. The work being completed at home mirrors the work being completed onsite. We recognise that all work may not be completed by 3:15 if you have tweaked your working day to suit your family's needs but if it has not been turned in by the following morning, staff will be ringing to check in.

The government directive is that pupils in KS1 receive 3 hours learning per day and KS2 receive 4 hours. This is an increase for KS2 from lockdown one where all primary pupils were to receive 3 hours.

## **Reading books**

We are keen to ensure that our KS2 children (Y3-6) have access to an Accelerated Reader (AR) book. Most children had a book with them at home at the time of lockdown but we are aware that they may now have completed those.

To assist with this, we are now in a position to organise and source new books. If your child has completed their AR book and quizzed at home, please email their class teaching assistant (directory below) and let them know that your child needs a new book. The TAs will then choose a book within your child's ZPD (the range they are working at) and leave it in the foyer the following day. The book will have your child's name clearly labelled and there will be no need to touch multiple items.

Year 3: Mrs Taylor [taylor@shrcps.org](mailto:taylor@shrcps.org)

Year 4: Mrs Spackman [spackman@shrcps.org](mailto:spackman@shrcps.org)

Year 5: Mrs Perkins [perkins@shrcps.org](mailto:perkins@shrcps.org)

Year 6: Mrs Brett [brett@shrcps.org](mailto:brett@shrcps.org)

EYFS/ KS1 Pupils (Reception-Y2), you will continue to access reading via Oxford Owl.

## **Resources**

There are blank exercise books, pens and pencils in the foyer if you wish to pick any of these items up.

## **Digital Devices**

We have allocated all devices now but have been successful in gaining a few more from the DfE. If you haven't received a device, have completed the google form and were expecting one, please get in touch with the school office on 558298 or email: [admin@shrcps.org](mailto:admin@shrcps.org)

There are some parents who have been notified and not yet collected their chrome book. If you no longer require the device, please let us know as soon as possible if you haven't already.

## **Free School Meals (FSM)**

We still have a lot of FSM food parcels for lunches left in school. If you are in receipt of FSM, please collect as soon as possible as they contain fresh items that need refrigerating. If you do not wish to accept your food parcel, please let the office know as soon as possible.

Anyone who thinks they might now qualify for FSM due to a change in circumstances, please ring the school office for advice.

## **Covid**

Just a reminder that if any child attending school is presenting as unwell, they MUST stay at home. If a child is showing any Covid-19 in school, they will be isolated, parents will be sent for and the child will not be able to come back to school until they have been tested.

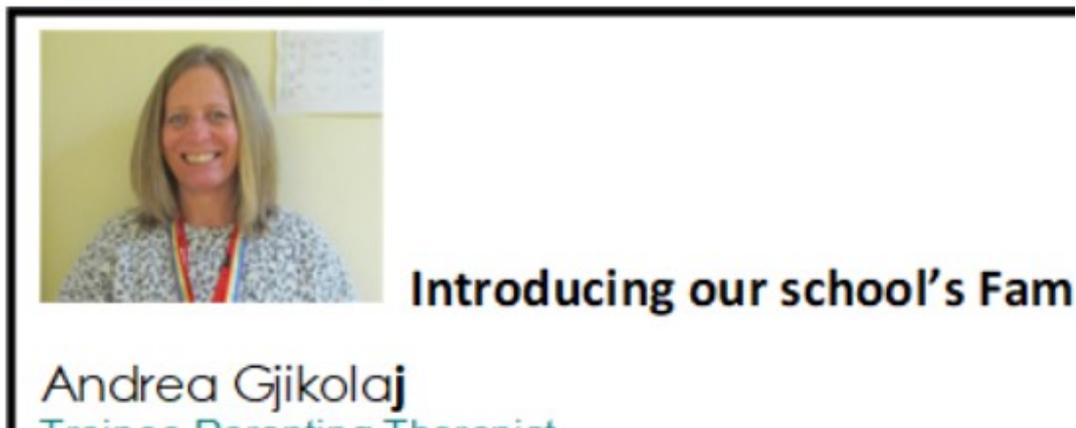
For those at home, please keep me informed of any pupils with positive cases even if they are not in school. This remains vital for track and trace purposes and to support Public Health South West.

## **Social, Emotional and Mental Health Support**

Those children who usually receive Thrive or other therapeutic support who are not in school will be contacted this week for well-being check ins. Those in school will continue to receive provision.

If **any** of our children are struggling emotionally at home, please let their class teacher know. We will deal with each case on an individual basis and decide on the best support.

Please note that in addition to our school pastoral team, we also employ a Family Support Worker (FSW). A fully qualified FSW, Andrea is presently training to be a parental therapist and has proved an invaluable support for some of our families since joining us. Her contact details are below. If you need a chat, she has a sympathetic ear and can talk for England.



## **Closing date for Reception places in September 2021**

The closing date for Reception places for September 2021 is this Friday. Please ensure that you have completed your form and submitted it.

We are a little bit nervous as to how the new school in Paignton is going to affect our numbers in September. We have been very lucky to have been over-subscribed for many years at Sacred Heart but a drop in numbers can have a huge impact on school funding. I intend to put a Facebook post online advertising our school for those parents who are still undecided. We would be very grateful if you could add positive comments for prospective parents to read – a parent's view. It is so hard to promote the school when we can't accommodate visitors. The family atmosphere, values-led curriculum and pastoral support at Sacred Heart is our USP; it's hard for families to feel that without visiting. Word of mouth is very important to us.

I think that's all for now; it will be a short Friday Flyer this week.

Take care everyone and remember that we are always here to help.

Nichola Day