

St Patrick's News



8th January 2021

Happy New Year!

This was definitely not the start to the year that we had wished for! I hope that all families continue to be well and have not been badly affected by the lockdown or the dreadful weather this week.

Despite the lockdown and difficult start *and* end to the week, in between, our in school provision for critical worker and vulnerable pupils has been working well. Our organisation is very different to the first lockdown, where the emphasis was more on childcare than learning; this time we have a bubble group for each year group and the lessons that go on in school mirror the remote learning that we are providing online. We have a larger number of pupils in school which helps to make everything feel more normal but obviously it is not at all the same as our usual busy school building. Unfortunately, we have no more spaces for children in school due to the limitations enforced by Covid-19 protective measures and our risk assessment; these are necessary to protect the health and safety of staff, pupils and families and limit, as much as possible, the transmission of Covid-19. As before, positive cases will result in bubbles being 'burst' and staff and pupils having to stay at home to self-isolate.

I know that staff, parents and children have done an amazing job this week getting to grips with Microsoft Teams, Class Notebook and Tapestry in EYFS and Year 1; please do not worry if you are struggling—we are only a few days in and the progress made so far has been fantastic. From next week, all remote learning will be posted to Class Teams instead of the school website. If you have any difficulty accessing the learning for your child, **please email the class teacher** and they will be able to send you a copy of the plans.

Alternatively, you can request a paper copy of learning plans/resources to collect from the office. Teachers are also more than happy to help if you have any queries—just email during school hours and they will get back to you as soon as possible. Please bear in mind that we are supporting children both in school and via remote learning, so a response may not be immediate.

I appreciate that it is difficult supporting children's learning at home, especially if you have more than one child, limited devices and if you are also juggling work commitments—do not feel that everything needs to be completed; prioritise reading, writing and maths work, along with time for exercise, fun and relaxation. To enable us to provide the best possible support, teachers will be monitoring what the children are completing/uploading and they will get in touch if they feel that any child needs additional support or if they have concerns.

We will spend the next couple of weeks getting used to Teams and then our next step will be to introduce online 'live' or pre-recorded lessons with class teachers for your child to participate in. Early Years and Year 1 have been doing this for reading and phonics and it seems to be working very well.

I know that mental health and wellbeing are a huge concern at the moment—there are lots of resources available to support in this area. Mrs Biggs has used Headspace meditation videos with the children in PSHE lessons: [Headspace - YouTube](#) and there are lots of suggestions on our website: [Wellbeing \(stpatricksrc-consett.durham.sch.uk\)](#)

Please keep us informed if your child tests positive for Covid-19. This will enable us to have a clear picture of the impact to our school community.

During the lockdown, we will post any new information to the dedicated page on the website and you will be alerted to new information or letters by text (please let us know if your contact details have changed).

We continue to pray for all our children and families during this worrying time. Take care and stay safe. With very best wishes,

 Head Teacher