

Archdiocese of Birmingham
St. Gerard's Catholic Primary School and Nursery
Head Teacher: Mr A Crehan



Yatesbury Avenue, Castle Vale, Birmingham, B35 6LB

Wednesday 4th November 2020

Dear Parents,

New National Restrictions from 5th November

I hope this letter finds you and your family well and refreshed after some quality time together during this last half term break.

I have no doubt that you will be aware of the worsening situation we are facing due to the increased number of Coronavirus cases and hospital admissions. You will also be aware that from Thursday 5th November, there will be a new set of national restrictions imposed on the country.

Our school is open as usual, and attendance is still compulsory. I am writing to you to make you aware of some of the increased safety measures we are putting in place to keep our whole community safe.

Covid-19 Symptoms – Protecting our community

Please **DO NOT send your child to school** if they or anyone else in your household displays any of these symptoms:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

If your child or any member of the household displays any of these symptoms then the whole household **MUST** isolate and arrange a Covid-19 test. **Isolation is a legal duty** and you can be fined if you do not adhere to the rules. If a test result is negative then they can come back to school. If it is positive you must let us know as soon as possible and we will agree their return date with you.

If you are unsure whether to send your child to school, please call the school office, **do not bring your child to the gates to discuss in person.**

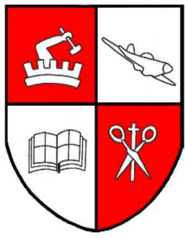
Collection at the end of the day- Protecting our community

Parents are currently allowed on site for collections as it is the quickest way of dismissing the children safely whilst minimising disruption and wait times. However, this is based on your support.

For all of our safety, from Thursday 5th November, we now require:

- adults to **wear a face covering/mask when collecting their children**
- adults to **socially distance themselves (2 metres)** from other parents, children and staff
- that you **leave the school site immediately** after collecting your child
- that only **1 adult collects** the children from the same household or support bubble
- not to allow any sibling that should be isolating onto our site (E.g. Their school bubble is closed)
- you keep your child by your side and to ensure they **do not play or run around** at the end of day

If we feel this isn't successfully being achieved, we will be forced to prohibit parents from the school site and introduce a queuing system at the school gates for the safety of all in our school community.



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Bubbles

As you are aware your child is in a 'bubble' for their safety. From September, we have been working hard to move away from bubbles that contain two year groups. By using more space, altering timetables and zoning areas in the playground, we are confident that we have achieved this. Therefore, **your child's class is now their 'bubble'**. We hope that in the event of a positive case that this will limit the amount of children that need to isolate.

Hand Washing

Handwashing is one of the most effective ways to keep safe. At school we teach the children how to wash their hands often and thoroughly. Please help us by teaching the children the correct way to wash their hands at home, and make sure that their hands are clean when coming to school in the morning.

Year 2 and 3 Swimming

As part of the new restrictions, leisure centres will be closed from Thursday 5th November 2020. Therefore, our swimming lessons will not take place for the rest of this term. We hope for them to resume in January 2021.

After School Clubs

All scheduled Dance Clubs and Eco Club will be postponed until January 2021. The children who have paid and were currently on the list will be able to attend the clubs when they are running again. I know how much the children look forward to these clubs, but I feel it is best at this time to put safety first.

Bubble Masses

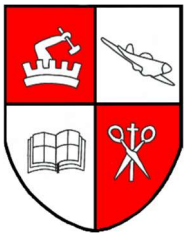
As you know, we have been celebrating socially distanced, bubble Masses in the church on a Wednesday. As part of the new restrictions, places of worship will now be closed and we will no longer be going to the church. Your child will still regularly participate in prayer services and collective worship in their bubbles, in their classrooms.

Lego Cards/Birthday Sweets

Please ensure that your child comes to school with what they need for learning only. We have had children bringing in Lego cards (and similar games) and sharing them with other children. At a time when we are trying to reduce contact, we do not want children sharing cards with each other. This is also the reason we are no longer allowing birthday sweets.

Messages & Forgotten Items

We are available to be contacted by phone (0121 464 2613) and by email (enquiry@stgerard.bham.sch.uk). If you have a message, please use these safe ways to deliver it. We **will not take messages at the gates**, no matter how short or quick they may be. We also will **no longer take forgotten items at gates**, please ensure your child has everything they need at the beginning of the day. This is to ensure the safety of our school staff.



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The reasons for all of these decisions are based on national restrictions and advice, but more importantly they are to ensure our children, parents and staff can stay safe. I always say our school is like a family, and I am proud of the way that we have looked after each other, and will continue to look after each other during this pandemic.

I am confident that I can rely on your support and cooperation throughout the challenging months ahead.

God bless

A Crehan
Headteacher