



# Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Primary School

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Dear Parents/Carers,

It is hard to believe we are now in the lead up to Christmas and that the children are quickly approaching the end of their first term of this academic year. Despite the many challenges faced, relating to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, our school community continues to face these challenges with optimism and courage. I am extremely proud of all of our pupils and the staff who have worked so hard this term in ensuring that our school is a safe, settled learning environment for our children.

I would like to thank parents for their ongoing patience and cooperation as we continue to follow government guidance and adhere to our school COVID-19 risk assessments in order to keep our school community as safe as possible. We would have loved to welcome you back, or even for some, into school for the first time for coffee mornings, Parent meetings, workshops and of course festive celebrations. However, as COVID cases rise we seek advice and clarification from our Health and Safety Teams and from Public Health. Whilst the decision around visitors remains at a school level given the number of cases, they advise us to video stream Nativities and our Christmas concerts via our website. I really do appreciate this will be disappointing and thank you again for your continued support in light of the decisions we have to make. We are hoping again that these can resume at some point in the New Year. After school clubs will resume after Christmas-further details to follow when we return to school in January.

### SEND Reviews

Our school SEND reviews will take place with parents next week. Pupil support plans and targets for the spring term will be finalised and reviewed with parents.

Reviews will take place virtually and further information regarding these appointments have been sent out in a separate letter today.

### Giving in Advent

This year we are collecting items for Stella Maris to make Christmas present bags for seafarers coming into Teesport. Around 90% of just about everything we use, comes to the British Isles by sea and many seafarers are away from home over Christmas.

Stella Maris is the largest ship-visiting network in the world. Its chaplains and volunteers visit ships all year round, looking after the physical and spiritual welfare of seafarers and fishers from around the world. The average length of duty is 9 months for many overseas seafarers, however, due to the pandemic, many have been at sea for over a year.

Through these acts of kindness, they reach out to seafarers who are often lonely, and at times, lacking basic needs. They sell phone cards to enable them to keep in contact with loved ones, give out warm clothes and listen to their problems, helping wherever they can.

Last year we gave out 800 Christmas boxes and bags to seafarers and fishers coming into Teesport, Redcar and Hartlepool. In helping our seafarers, we want to teach children here about generosity and compassion for others.

If you have any questions or would like to know more about the work of Stella Maris please visit [stellamaris.org.uk](http://stellamaris.org.uk).

### **The things we are collecting are:**

Pairs of warm socks	Shaving Foam	Pack of disposable razors
Woolly hats/snoods	Bar of soap	Deodorant
Pair of men's warm gloves	Shower sponge or flannel	Packet of biscuits
Chocolate/sweets	Pack of Cards	Shower Gel

Toothpaste	Box of dominoes	Toothbrushes
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**Please note the deadline for all donations is Monday 13<sup>th</sup> December. Children can give any donations to their class teacher please.**

**Staffing changes**

Sadly, we say goodbye to Mr Davison, our Year 3 teacher this week. We thank him for his support; we are grateful for the time he gave us and we wish him every success in his next career move. He will be missed by all. Miss Howells has joined us and will be teaching our Year 3 class for the rest of this academic year.

Mrs Johnson, who returned to school following her maternity leave, has decided to spend more time with her daughter. I know you will all join me in sending our best wishes to Mrs Johnson and her family and in thanking her for her contribution and support to the school over the years. Mrs Myhill quickly supported us again in this class to ensure the consistency of the children’s education, Mrs Myhill is well known by most year groups across school. Miss Mather is our new Year 4 teacher leading teaching across this academic year in this class.

We welcome Miss Howells and Miss Mather; they are very excited to be part of our whole school team and have already forged very positive relationships with the children.

We are also excited to announce that we successfully recruited a school cook. Mrs Helen Barker joined us two weeks ago; she has extensive experience of cooking delicious meals working in a school kitchen. Children have been introduced to a new menu, they choose their meal on a morning and are given a colour band to ensure that when they attend the school dining hall they are given the correct meal that they chose earlier. This is proving to be very successful. Our dinner numbers are rising; if your child would like to transfer to school meals from packed lunch we would strongly encourage this and if your child has any dietary needs you would like to discuss first please contact the office and we can arrange for you to speak to Mrs Barker.

**Christmas week: 13<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> December**

We have an exciting calendar of events planned to spread some Christmas cheer and help our children and families enjoy the lead up to Christmas. Whilst this won’t be the same as previous years as we cannot have our usual Christmas Plays and Carol Concerts etc. we hope to still enjoy the festive period in school and make this as special as possible for the children.

If you have given permission for your child to be photographed in school-based publications including the website etc. we will assume you are happy for them to perform virtually online also. Unfortunately, we will need to exclude from the videoing any children who do not have these permissions. Please let us know if you wish to change your photo permissions at all.

Many of you have asked about the giving of cards; these will be allowed to be distributed in school this year.

**Forthcoming Events:**

**Christmas Dinner Day**

**Monday 13<sup>th</sup> December**

Christmas dinner costs £2.15 for those who pay for their child’s meal or for those children that would like to have lunch with their class friends and would normally bring a packed lunch. Please pay this on ParentPay the week commencing Monday, 6<sup>th</sup> December so the office staff know it is for that day. This is also the day when children can come to school wearing their Christmas Jumpers with their school uniform trousers and skirts. We are kindly asking for a donation of £1.00. All donations will be sent to Save the Children. **This will appear on ParentPay as Christmas Jumper Day. Alternatively, you can send your donation into school.**

**Christmas Parties:**

<b>Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> December Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and 2.</b>	<b>Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> December Years 3-6</b>
<p><b>The cost of the Christmas party will be <u>£2.00</u> with the children receiving a ‘goodie bag’. This will appear as Christmas Party 2021 on ParentPay.</b></p> <p>All children should come into school dressed in appropriate party clothes (please remember children still need appropriate footwear and a coat for lunchtimes and breaktimes!)</p>	

## Movie Afternoon (Reception-Y6)

**Thursday 16th December** – Christmas Movie afternoon. As the children's half term behaviour reward, children will have a movie afternoon with hot chocolate and treats.



## Christmas Nativity

We are planning for all the children in Nursery and Reception to participate in our school Nativity together. Unfortunately, due to current restrictions, we will not be able to gather together this year to celebrate this special event. Instead, the children will be filmed and the Nativity posted on the school website.

## KS1 and 2

The children are now starting to practise for their Christmas performance with Mr Bourdier. The songs will be shared with you via the school website.



## Liturgies

Class Liturgies will be held each week during Advent in classes. Again, we are unable at this time to be able to have parent/carers attend.



### Attendance

Attendance will continue to be a whole school target for every child across school. Thank you to those parents and carers who have supported us in ensuring their child attends school. Our attendance is still not above national but is improving and our persistent absence figures in school have started to reduce. Please continue to support us in ensuring your child attends school and arrives on time.

### Uniform

Please make sure your child attends school in their correct uniform and on PE days they have their sports jogging trousers on, their white round necked t-shirt and their school cardigan or sweatshirt. Tracksuit tops or alternative hoodies must not be worn on PE days. We had started to see an array of coloured hoodies or tops appearing on PE days so feel this needed a gentle reminder.

We have started to look at the Dfe new statutory guidance on uniforms and we most certainly will have regard to this. We are keen to make uniform items children have grown out of available to other families if parents would like to donate clothing to school. We will send further information about this in the New Year.

PLEASE NOTE SCHOOL WILL CLOSE ON FRIDAY 17<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2021 FOR THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS AT 1:30PM

– there will be no Wrap Around provision on the afternoon of this day.

School returns on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup>  
January 2021.

### Prayer

We pray for all school leaders across the world during these challenging times. May they be given strength and wisdom to continue making difficult decisions during this global pandemic. We pray for all families who have lost loved ones due to the pandemic and we pray for the scientists who continue to work on much needed vaccines. May they be given the strength and courage to continue with their amazing work.

We pray for all our fantastic NHS staff who have worked so hard throughout this difficult time and continue to do so. Please Lord keep them safe and give them the courage to continue their brave work.

Amen

A Merry Christmas to you all. God bless you and your family with peace and joy for the year to come. Thank you for your continued support,

Mrs Graham & Mrs. Sutherland

*'Christ at the centre, Children at the heart'*

