



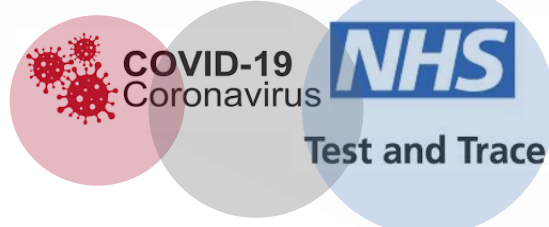
★ Citizen of the Week

★ As we had a VIP (socially distanced) visitor this morning, it was not possible to have our weekly Celebration Assembly. This week's award has been decided, but we are waiting until next week's Celebration Assembly to reveal the name so that the recipient has the same experience as others when receiving the award.

COVID-19 Update

Tiers

Last week I shared information about the new, tougher system of Tiers, which sees Sheffield in 'Tier 3'. Please click [here](#) to discover some helpful answers to some frequently asked questions (FAQs).



Changes to the End of Term Arrangements

On Tuesday I sent you a letter about changes to the end of term arrangements along with the reasons for making the change. This is a reminder of what was shared.

As you will know our term dates are set in partnership with other Sheffield Catholic Schools, taking full account of the Bishop's guidance that asks schools to work as close to the two great Christian feasts of Christmas and Easter as possible. This year our final day of the Term 2 is **Tuesday 22nd December 2020**.

We all understand that this is no ordinary year. Everyone in our school and in all schools is working extremely hard to provide all children with the education and support that each of them needs in the face of a rampant coronavirus pandemic that has swept across the UK, impacting Sheffield so heavily that the city was placed in the highest tier prior to National Lockdown 2 and is back in the highest tier now that National Lockdown 2 has ended.

We have had pupils in three classes isolating and learning from home and more pupils isolating because they have COVID-19 or they were a contact of someone with COVID-19. Headteachers and Governing Bodies Sheffield's Catholic schools have worked hard to respond as situations develop, and have thought deeply about the implications of staying in school until Tuesday 22nd December.

The government's recent announcements regarding the significant five day relaxation of rules over Christmas, starting on Wednesday 23rd December, focused our thoughts because this change will allow unfettered contact between up to three different households, increasing the risk of further infections.

The blunt truth is, that if we had known what we know now (about COVID-19, lockdowns/tiers, the five-day relaxation of rules) when term dates were decided, we would have set them differently.

As a result we feel that we have no choice but to close our building on **Friday 18th December 2020** and provide children with home-learning tasks for the last two days of term. In doing this it is important to stress that the term dates are **not** changing. We are simply seeking to bring the last day in school forward in the interests of public health. In arriving at this difficult decision, Headteachers and Governing Bodies have given full consideration to the risks and impacts of doing nothing or making the change.

As part of this process we consulted widely and the decision to make this change was supported by:

- *Andrew Jones (Interim Director of Education and Skills, Sheffield City Council)*
- *Greg Fell (Director of Public Health, Sheffield City Council)*
- *Stephen Betts (CEO, Learn Sheffield)*
- *Bob Sawyer (CEO, Hallam Schools Partnership Academy Trust)*
- *Fr Peter McGuire (Hallam Diocese)*



Our Reasoning

If our last day in school is Friday 18th December and I am notified of a positive COVID-19 case on Monday 21st or Tuesday 22nd December, I can notify those who were close contacts during the previous 48 hours.

The message will be picked up quickly, because school will be open, meaning that the contact-tracing is more straightforward and the families who are affected have a little more time to alter their plans, especially if they were going to meet up with relatives and friends in other households.

If, however, we remain in school up to Tuesday 22nd December and are notified of a positive case after that time, then school will be closed and the message might not be picked up as quickly. This could mean that communication to those who have been a close contact of an infected person might be delayed, increasing the risk of transmission within the community and any households that the infected person has mixed with. This could create all sorts of challenges for families who have travelled to stay with family and friends, especially if anyone in the households being visited is vulnerable.

Finishing on Tuesday 22nd December also increases the likelihood of families receiving a call from me on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day or Boxing Day to inform them that their child has to isolate, as one positive test result can easily lead to at least 32 other children and staff having to isolate. This could impact many SJF families and so it would be vital that we can contact-trace those affected quickly.

From a public health perspective, closing the building on Friday 18th December 2020 makes things simpler and potentially safer, especially for families planning to meet up with family and friends in other households. Obviously, it also reduces the risk of an unwanted call from me on Christmas Day because it gives families a full week before Christmas Day, meaning that families would know by Tuesday 22nd December if there was any need to self-isolate because of a case in school.

What will happen on Monday 21st and Tuesday 22nd December 2020?

Children will learn from home on both days; completing a range of appropriate activities prepared by their teachers, who will also be available to offer learning support via Microsoft Teams. Children deemed vulnerable and/or those living with special educational needs and disabilities will receive specific and targeted support too from colleagues.

Meetings with Teachers

The children in all classes will be expected to join a meeting with their teachers (via Microsoft Teams), at the beginning and end of both days. The purpose will be for the class to come together and share their morning/evening prayers. During the morning meeting teachers will explain activities (including 'Stretch' and 'Support' activities) and remind the children about how to get teachers' help during the day. At the end of the day teachers and children will come together to share the day's work, learning, achievements and issues (to follow up at an appropriate point) as well as evening prayers. We will lend the laptops we have to families who do not have enough tablets/laptops at home and the meetings are at different times to hopefully also make things a little easier. Please see below:

9.00am & 2.30pm

- Y3
- Y4
- Y5
- Y6

9.30am & 3.00pm

- FS2
- Y1
- Y2

The Microsoft Teams log-on details for children in Years 1-6 are the same as during Lockdown 1. FS2 details were shared this week. Please email year4@st-johnfisher.org next week if you have forgotten your details. There are useful links on the SJF website homepage which can also be accessed below:

- Microsoft Teams '**Quick Guide**' (click [here](#))
- Microsoft Teams '**Log-on Guide**' (click [here](#))



Term 2 Smiley Scores

These will be shared next week.

SJF Calendar/Forthcoming Events

Click [here](#) to link to our online calendar.

Ten:Ten Resources



Consultation: Relationships and Sex Education

Relationships Education is now statutory in all primary schools meaning that the compulsory elements must be taught. Details of our new Relationship Education programme: 'Life to the Full' have been shared and you have been invited to review the course content and resources and to share your feedback and questions. Thank you to those who have shared feedback, there is still time if you would like to respond.

The new programme, that will be introduced in Term 3 (January 2021), was created specifically for Catholic primary schools and so is being adopted by the majority of Catholic settings in Sheffield and across the country. The programme, based on 'A Model Catholic RSE Curriculum', was created by the Catholic Education Service and was highlighted as a work of good practice by the Department for Education.

Week 13 Attendance (Friday to Thursday)			
1 st	Y6		98.3%
2 nd	Y2		98.0%
3 rd	FS2		96.4%
4 th	Y3		96.1%
5 th	Learning at home	Y1 (4 days)	x
6 th	Learning at home	Y4 (4 days)	x
7 th	Learning at home	Y5 (5 days)	x
Average Attendance = 97.2% (Target = 98%)			



Get Set, GO!			
1 st	Y6		93%
2 nd	Y2		91%
3 rd	FS2		89%
4 th	Y3		87%
5 th	Y1		x
6 th	Y4		x
7 th	Y5		x
Average (4 classes) = 90%			

The PTFA Santa in School Day 2020!

Today we were visited by Santa! The children and staff in school looked brilliant, dressed in their Christmas jumpers or party clothes! The day began with Santa and his elves greeting our children and families as they arrived for the start of the day!

Everyone was so excited! Santa then visited each class and spent a little time with the children in each, safely distanced. Everyone had a wonderful time! I am delighted that Santa is returning on **Monday 7th December** in order to see the children in Y5 who will be returning from isolation on that day.



I would like to thank our incredible PTFA for all their hard work in organising and running this most special of events in our annual school calendar! Never has it been more needed and more appreciated than this year.

Obviously this year has been particularly challenging, and though regulations and restrictions meant that certain aspects of the day had to be scaled back, what was so richly evident was all the thought, hard work and enthusiasm that had gone in to making the day so special. It was an incredible feat!

Events like this, which contribute so richly to our children's experience of school, do not happen by magic. They take planning and teamwork. If you would like to get involved; to make a real difference to children in our school by helping the PTFA **please get in touch**. All offers of help are appreciated greatly. New members and their ideas are always welcomed! If you want to find out more please email the Clair Prestidge and PTFA committee (ptfa@st-johnfisher.org). Pictures of Santa Claus in classes will be shared after he has visited Y5 on Monday, but here are a few of Santa greeting the children at the beginning of the day...





SJF School Council Update

Here is a message from one of student Councillors:

This week at School Council the Y6 children continued to learn about the democratic process:

"We learned about how democracy has changed through history. It went through changes in Ancient Rome and during the French Revolution. In Medieval times there was no democracy and this was bad because kings and queens could do whatever they wanted."

Summer, School Council Treasurer

SEND Review Meetings

The latest round of review meetings for children with special educational needs and disabilities continue on Monday 7th, Tuesday 8th, Wednesday 9th December 2020. Letters have been sent and appointments made.



Our Weekly SJF Sixty Second Challenge



Our Weekly SJF Sixty Second Challenge

Next week's sixty second challenge is all about 'star jumps'. You can watch a video to see a demonstration by one of our brilliant Sports Majors by clicking [here](#).

Well done everyone who took part in last week's challenge!



Extreme Weather & School Closure Reminders

A reminder that, in the event of bad weather, we will always try to open. However, if the weather conditions are extreme or the threat of extreme weather later in the day is severe, then I will have to give serious consideration to the safety of our children; you, their families; and my colleagues travelling to and from school.

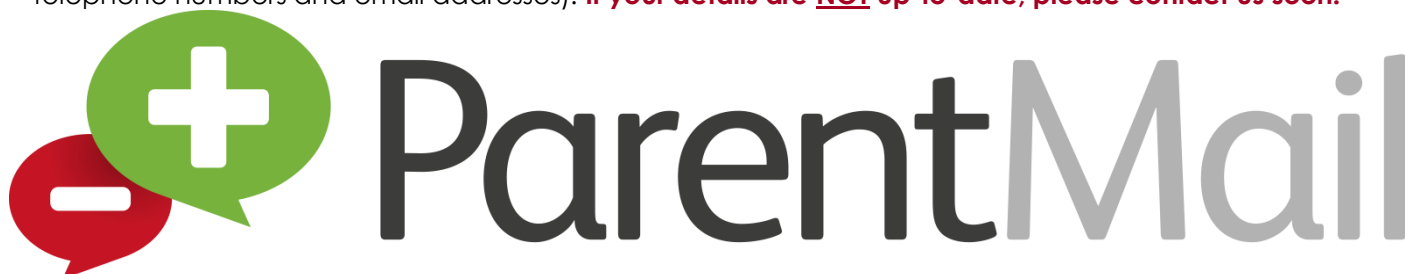
If the weather is extreme then I have three options:

1. to open school as normal
2. to open school with a later start time and/or earlier or staggered finish time
3. to close school completely

My decision will always be based on the best information available, including the latest weather information as well official advice from the local authority and emergency services.

I will also take account of what neighbouring schools are doing – and it is often the case that there is a flurry of calls between Headteachers very early in the morning when we are all faced with extreme weather. I repeat, our priority is to provide an education to our children so we would always try to open if we can.

We will use the 'Parentmail' service to contact parents/carers by text AND email – to inform you of our decision. This is one of the reasons why it is important to inform us of any change of details (including mobile telephone numbers and email addresses). **If your details are NOT up-to-date, please contact us soon!**



We will share important information via our website: www.st-johnfisher.org so please keep checking and sign up for alerts at the bottom right-hand corner of the home page (www.st-johnfisher.org/home/).

We will also notify the local authority and BBC Radio Sheffield and details of the arrangements will be shared on their websites. We notify the local authority and BBC Radio Sheffield if we have a later start and/or are closing earlier. Please note that we will **not** notify them if we are opening as normal.

Sometimes when we are open the weather conditions can deteriorate dramatically during the school day. If this happens, we will use 'Parentmail' again in order to notify parents/carers that school is closing earlier. The website will be updated (and alerts sent to those who register for them) and we will contact the local authority and radio stations. If we are remaining open as usual we may post confirmation of this on the website.

Late Start

A decision on the time of the late start will be made on the day based on the information available to me. Typically, a later start time will either be 9.30am or 10.00am. This means that children can arrive right up to the *later* start time without being marked as 'late' in the register. Children can also be dropped off before the later start time and will be looked after by staff in school, where it is warm. JPAC will operate as normal, and will contact customers directly or through our 'Parentmail' service if their information changes.



Early Finish

The timing of an earlier finish will again depend on the weather conditions and the best information I have to hand. We will aim to contact parents/carers via 'Parentmail' and ask them to arrange for their children to be collected from a certain time or as soon as possible. If children are left, staff will obviously remain to care for them until they are collected. However your cooperation is expected and appreciated because if the weather becomes particularly difficult, I also have to consider how my colleagues will get home safely once the children are collected. If children are just left with us, it could cause staff significant additional problems. If you are not contacted and there is no information on the website then it is safe to assume that school will be closing at the normal time. **No need to phone us.**

Phoning School

Please read the text messages, emails, website alerts and look at the website itself, as well the local authority and radio station websites. Calls to school should only be made in exceptional circumstances or emergency situations and not simply to confirm something we have shared. We want to leave the phone line as free as possible so that staff are able to make/take important calls. Thank you for your cooperation.

Important Reminder: Cough Sweets

Here is a reminder from Mrs Pickering regarding cough sweets and lozenges:

"In the past we noticed that a few children have brought cough lozenges in to school. Whilst we understand that parents/carers are giving these in order to ease their children's cough/sore throat symptoms, they are a form of medicine and so have the potential to cause harm. They also present a potential choking risk.

We have strict procedures regarding the use of medicines in school and a healthy eating philosophy that does not allow children to have sweets. Our concern also is that lozenges brought in to school without the knowledge of staff will be shared and consumed by children as if they are sweets. Please support us by not sending your child into school with lozenges. Thank you for your support."

Our Catholic Life

Parish News

Information about parish and Diocesan life including the times of Masses, Confession and sacramental preparation is available via this link to the parish website: <http://www.ourladyoflourdessheffield.org.uk/>.

December Prayer: The Act of Contrition

During Advent we prepare for Christmas by saying sorry for our mistakes and by trying hard to make those key changes in our lives that we need to make. Our prayer is the Act of Contrition.

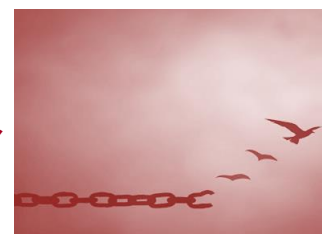
O my God

Because you are so good –

I am very sorry that I have sinned against You,

And by the help of Your grace –

I will not sin again.



Weekly Liturgy of the Word

Our next Liturgy of the Word will be led by the young people of **Y3**. It will be recorded on Wednesday 9th December 2020 and the film will be available to watch the next day on **Thursday 10th December 2020** by clicking [here](#).

Daily Advent Class Liturgies

These take place in every class on all days except PE days and when a class has Music or French lesson at the end of the day. Sadly restrictions mean that we cannot invite parents/carers to join us but pictures will be shared on class pages. Thank you.



Golden Children & Writing Champions

Details of this week's recipients will be published in next week's newsletter.

Curriculum Showcase

Unfortunately we can hold a showcase as we would normally at the end of term, so we will be putting it online instead. Slideshows of children's work will be available to view from Monday 21st December 2020.

Achievements Outside of School

At St John Fisher we celebrate all achievements in and out of school. Whether achievements are big or small we love to publish and celebrate them. Please email them in via: enquiries@st-johnfisher.org. This week's achievements are:

- **Luca** in **Y3** has had a modelling assignment for National Express. We all hope that you really enjoyed the experience Luca!

Statement to Live By

Next week our 'statement to live by' is '**I can work, rest and pray every day**'.

Time to talk: Together you could think about all the things you do in a typical day from the moment you wake up in the morning to the moment you go to bed. Make a list and see how long it is. What things do you do every day? What things do you do now and again? What do you enjoy? What don't you like?

Using different coloured pens highlight/underline:

- in the first colour, anything to do with work or school;
- in the second colour, anything you do that is about 'you' time - relaxing and rest; and
- in the third colour, the moments when you pray (and listen) to God.

What do you notice? Is your typical day balanced? What do you struggle to find time for? Do you need to plan your day differently?



**A healthy family life
requires frequent use of three phrases:
"May I? Thank you, and I'm sorry"
and
"never, never, never end the day
without making peace."**

Pope Francis

A final thought...

"The true sign of intelligence is not knowledge but imagination."

Albert Einstein

Best wishes,
Mr Barratt

