



St Augustine of Canterbury Catholic Primary School

Headteacher:
Mrs L Prestidge
Tel: 01634 371892
Email: office@staugustine.medway.sch.uk

Deanwood Drive
Rainham
Kent
ME8 9NP

7 January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

As you know, the Prime Minister announced a [new national lockdown](#), schools are now closed nationally, while it is a challenging situation for schools and families to be in again, we are not alone. During the period of national lockdown, schools remain open to vulnerable children and the children of [critical workers](#) only. All other children will learn remotely, the timescale we all have from the Government is until February half term.

As a Headteacher, I am very grateful to have exceptionally supportive staff, parents and children. We keep our Risk Assessments and operational procedures under constant review as is the case with changing government announcements and guidance for schools. Since the announcement of the National Lockdown, which has included a much longer duration of time for the majority of children to learn remotely from home than was originally announced to schools and families under the Contingency Framework; we have again reviewed our operational procedures to ensure the Health and Safety and well-being of our children and staff.

Critical Key Worker

We have always been extremely supportive and grateful to Critical Workers and are of course aware of the guidance which states: 'children with at least one parent or carer who is [listed as a critical worker](#) are eligible for a school place. It is not necessary for both parents to be critical workers'. However, it is important to be mindful that the facility is intended to be used by parents who are involved in critical occupations that are central to the Covid-19 national efforts and should be balanced with your child's safety and the safety of others in the community.

Therefore, we ask critical worker parents to consider the necessity for your child to be in school. Whilst we appreciate that many families are eligible for critical worker status, where a family can support home learning they should try to do so. Where it is impossible for that to happen, a place in critical worker provision will be made available (on the days needed).

If you have not previously provided evidence regarding your Critical Worker status, please do so as soon as possible to the office@staugustine.medway.sch.uk email address.

Remote learning

Our VLE (Virtual Learning Environment) is well established; we have been providing high quality remote learning since March 2020 (including when the school was open fully during Terms 1 and 2 for individual cases of isolations or whole class bubbles isolating). This week, we have also been able to implement Remote Learning with immediate effect for children at home. We have been committed to providing high quality Remote learning and will continue to do so. As you know from a number of communications, Remote learning can be accessed via the VLE on our



website. There you will find detailed weekly overviews for your child's year group containing curriculum learning including: Oak Academy video lessons, BBC Bitesize (new resources will also available next week from the BBC), subscriptions to Mathletics, Phonics Play and Timestables Rock Stars and lessons reflective of their year group curriculum and what is being taught in school.

Within the new National Lockdown, the teachers will facilitate 'live' lessons over Microsoft Teams across the week where possible. Days and times of scheduled 'Live' lessons will be included within the year groups weekly overviews on the VLE. We have altered Live lessons going forward to ensure that it is manageable for staff and families; these will be reviewed regularly. Although a register is taken, these extra live lessons are not compulsory but are another offer of our school providing the best possible opportunities for all of our children and families. Given the news that we are now in a National Lockdown until at least February half term, we encourage families to follow a learning at home timetable that suits your family needs. We provide comprehensive Remote Learning to support the children's education and progress at home.

As a school and families at home; we will continue to work together to support our children's education and well-being, including physical exercise and fun creative opportunities to engage their enthusiasm in a broad curriculum including STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Maths). Like last year, we understand the difficulties that some families may face with home learning and want to help. Please contact the class email address or email the office if you need support.

It is important to be aware that staff are teaching the children of Critical Workers and Vulnerable children in school and providing Remote Learning to children at home. To avoid putting undue workload onto our hard-working staff, they may not be available to reply to emails immediately; however, they will endeavour to reply when they are available within school hours.

During this time, I want to again share with you the importance of well-being and maintaining good mental health for yourself and your children. It is important that you support and take care of your family's mental health - there are a number of things you can do, and additional support is available if you need it.

The Department for Education have guidance on supporting Children and Young People's mental health during this COVID-19 pandemic. This can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

The guidance contains important and useful information to support you and your child. We also have a number of resources available on our website within the 'Home Learning' pencil under PSHE.

I would like to say thank you to all of the parents and carers who have been emailing the teachers to inform them of your child's learning and to submit their work. The response this week has been impressive and demonstrates your continued support and dedication to our children's education and well-being.

Thank you for your continued support.

Mrs L Prestidge

Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead

