



# St Francis Catholic Primary School Newsletter

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www.st-francis.kent.sch.uk

Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2020

Dear Parents

We wish you all a belated Happy New Year and a warm welcome back to school from everyone at St Francis. We welcome new children and families into the family of St Francis and hope that you settle in with us quickly and smoothly. We are looking forward to working with you over the coming terms and continuing the good progress that has been made so far. The children looked very smart as they walked into school this morning – please can we remind you that children should not have extreme haircuts, gelled hair or very large hair bows.

This term is another very busy term so please make a note of all the events between now and the end of term (Friday 14<sup>th</sup> February). Please also make sure you check the website regularly and read the weekly newsletter carefully in case there are any additional opportunities in which the school is able to take part.

All **school staff** clubs will begin next week (week beginning 13<sup>th</sup> January).

## A New Year's Prayer

Lord,

In this new year, thank you for your constant presence. No matter how hard the previous year, no matter the challenges and anxieties facing us this new year, you are here. Help us remember Lord, that the promises and setbacks ahead are no match for your love for us and you will be with us to guide us at every step.

## Reception New Intake 2020

If you have a child eligible to start school in September 2020 and have applied for a place at St Francis through the Local Authority system **please make sure that you have completed and returned the supplementary forms required by us as a Catholic School.** We are required to rank all applications according to our criteria and can only do this if we have all the evidence needed.

## St Francis Charity Bring and Buy sale.

On Friday 24<sup>th</sup> January the year six pupils will be leading our annual charity bring and buy sale.

So search through your cupboards for toys, games, books and jigsaws your children no longer play with, preferably in good condition, and donate them to school to be sold to other children. We can't do it without you! On the day your child/children can bring a maximum of £5 to spend.

Spend some time during the next two weeks clearing out bedrooms and cupboards and send any donations into school between Monday 20<sup>th</sup> January and Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January.

## **Diary Dates**

Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> January Bring Your Parent to Experiment - 9.10am - classrooms

Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> January - End of Year Two Assessment Information Session for Parents 3.05pm – school hall

Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> January – Parent Council planning meeting – 6.00pm – school hall

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> January - Bring and Buy

Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> January - Maths Workshop for all parents - 9.15am – Classrooms

Friday 14<sup>th</sup> February – last day of term

**When required, further details of each event will be sent out either separately or via the weekly newsletter**

## ***Severe Snow/Ice Plan for Parents and Families***

Every winter brings the possibility of snow and ice. Extreme bad weather can cause widespread and prolonged disruption. Schools are often affected and it can be difficult to maintain an education service.

As a fundamental principle every effort must be made to keep schools open, even if only limited numbers of pupils can attend. However schools may close due to 'unavoidable' circumstances. Those circumstances being that it is no longer safe for staff or pupils to be onsite.

We recognise that it is important our school remains open so parents are able to work and pupils can continue to learn. St Francis will make every effort to prepare for severe snow/ice this winter by gritting pathways and clearing access points.

### ***How will we let you me know if the school is closed?***

If we do experience severe snow/ice resulting in hazardous conditions, our Headteacher may have to take the decision to close the school. Once this decision has been made we will notify parents via the Kent Closures website. To determine whether St Francis is open or closed please visit [www.kentclosures.co.uk](http://www.kentclosures.co.uk). Search for the school in the search box. The Kent Closures website can also be used to find out if other services in Kent are open or closed, such as nurseries, children's centres and libraries. We also recommend parents sign up for SMS/Email alerts on the Kent Closures website. This service will send an SMS or email alert to let parents know if St Francis is closed. Parents can also listen to KMFM, BBC Radio Kent or Heart FM to hear if the school has closed.

### ***What can you do to help?***

- Please visit [www.kent.gov.uk/winter](http://www.kent.gov.uk/winter) for more information about gritting routes and travel issues around Kent so you can plan your journey.
- Please approach the school from **the pedestrian gate**
- Please can you provide a packed lunch from home in case school meals cannot be provided.
- Don't forget suitable warm clothing – gloves, hats, scarves, wellies etc. or even a change of clothing.
- If you are a working parent or feel you may have a problem with a sudden earlier pick up, please could you put a back-up plan in place with another family member or parent and inform the school. This will allow staff to leave earlier for their safety if weather dictates.

## E – SAFETY ADVICE FOR PARENTS

There will be more children handling digital devices than ever before now Christmas presents have been opened, and despite the happiness and entertainment they can bring, they can pose a number of dangers too. So, how can parents protect their children after they unwrap their digital gifts? Here are our top tips for parents:

### **Buying gifts**

Take care when shopping online for your Christmas presents. Only use secure websites to avoid falling for scams.

Before proceeding with an order, spend an extra two minutes to research the security of the product.

### **Security**

Help your children to set up their accounts on their new devices and ensure their settings are set to private. Take the time before Christmas Day to read the manual and get to grips with security and privacy options. We advise that you set up a 'two-factor authentication' process when logging in to an online service. Some toys and devices are fitted with web cameras – you can turn the remote viewing option off in the device's settings. In addition to this, remove any default location tracking and GPS settings on new devices.

### **Passwords**

Some toys and devices have been found to have unencrypted Wi-Fi connections or unsecured Bluetooth connections. If this is the case, add a secure password or a PIN. Ensuring that passwords are secure is fundamental when protecting your children. When creating a password, remember to:

- set up unique passwords for new accounts
- avoid using easy-to-guess phrases such as 'freddie1'
- change passwords and usernames on new devices from default
- check your router has a strong password and latest security updates

### **Setting up parental controls**

We advise that you set up parental controls for young and vulnerable children to help prevent them from viewing content or engaging in activities that they shouldn't be. Additionally, take interest in your child's online activities. Play with them on their devices and encourage open conversation to help build that trust and confidence that will mean your child can confide in you if they ever feel uncomfortable, troubled, worried or unsafe.

### **Check age restrictions**

Games and apps have age restrictions. It's important that you make yourself aware of these age restrictions and WHY they have these restrictions and make the decision whether it is appropriate for your child.

### **Be a role model**

It's often the case that children copy the actions of their parents, guardians and even siblings, therefore it's important to set good examples and be a positive role model that they can look up to.

### **Set boundaries**

If you feel like your child is either spending too much time on their devices or maybe taking part in inappropriate activities, it's not a bad thing to be strict and set boundaries.