



St Teresa's Catholic Primary School
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Headteacher: Mrs Nuala Cashell
MA Ed, NPQH

Dear Parents

12th January 2021

Last week was definitely not the first week back I had expected to start off our Spring term. I can only apologise for technology failures last week and I thank the 95% of the parents who were extremely understanding and supportive. Staff are working hard to adapt to the changing landscape of remote teaching in extremely difficult circumstances. I thank all of the parents who are doing their best at home with home schooling. Teachers are working tirelessly to plan work, deliver lessons and set activities daily. We have set four lessons per day but completely understand that sometimes it may not be possible to complete all tasks set if you are working from home alongside delivering home schooling. We ask you just to do your best and support wherever possible. We all know this is not an ideal situation but we need to continue with this, under government guidance, to keep us all safe.

As before, we are offering NHS Frontline key workers **only** a place at school. The government have said that schools are only to be used when sending your child to school is essential and there is no alternative solution. *"The guidance sets out that parents and carers who are critical workers should keep their children at home if they can"*. Some parents are requesting places as they are struggling with home schooling; this is not the idea. As many children as possible should be staying at home to keep families and staff safe.

Last week I received 70 requests for places in school. I know everyone's situation is different and we find ourselves in difficult circumstances but I cannot accommodate your request if you are not an NHS frontline worker otherwise I would end up with 60% of pupils back in school, which is not safe. I have a duty of care as an employer to my staff and to the school community to keep as many families safe as possible and reduce the spread of Covid.

Certificate of Catholic Practice

Fr Dan and Fr Rick will be available in the small hall at Holy Trinity at 3pm on both Wednesday 13th and Thursday 14th January to sign your Supplementary Application Forms for admission to Catholic Primary Schools. Please ensure that you maintain social distancing if you need to queue.

Laptops

I have managed to source an additional 11 laptops from the DfE and have also purchased a further 12 devices from school funds. This means we now have an allocation of 27 laptops to loan to students who do not have the means to complete online learning. There seems to be some confusion about who is entitled to a laptop. Our allocation of 15 laptops from the DfE are to meet the needs of all 210 children in school, so we have to follow Government criteria to allocate them and vulnerable families will be prioritised. All Children are not entitled to a "free laptop" so if you have access to a laptop at home please do not ask for one from school, as this will stop children who have no computer at home accessing home learning. The laptops are on loan while we are in lockdown. They will be returned to school when lockdown ends and used when the need arises for bubble isolation. Any damage to laptops must be paid for by parents.

If you need a printed work pack, please contact the office. You may contact the school via email - office@st-teresarc.essex.sch.uk or telephone between 8am and 10.30am.

Take care, and keep safe.
Mrs Cashell