



## Holy Cross School Newsletter Friday 8 January 2021



Dear Parents and Carers,

Happy new year to our wonderful School community! This is not the start to 2021 that any of us wished for. We now know that Schools will not return in full until after the February half term at the earliest. We await further information from the UK government as the picture develops over the next few weeks. As I mentioned in my emails last week, (was that only last week? It feels like a long, long time ago!) we, in education, only hear of big government announcements at the same time as the rest of the country. The announcement that Lewisham Schools would be open, then closed, were all given to me via announcements to the whole country.

### **Online learning**

This week saw the start of our online learning for children. We are delighted with the number of children who have been engaging with the three lessons each day at 9:30, 11am and 1:30pm. It is very important that children understand that this is term time and they are still at School but just in a different format. The structure of our learning provision is designed to do just this. I am aware that some children are accessing the recorded lessons later in the day, if this suits your circumstances this is perfectly acceptable. It came to our attention this week that Microsoft Teams can be accessed via Playstations and Xboxes, if you have these at home then this may be another device for you to use. Thank you to all parents who have helped their children to attend these online lessons. I am sure there were some teething issues this week but we are all on our way to becoming experts

### **Covid update**

I am sure that we are all avidly watching the news at present, there is a lot to comprehend. Currently in London data tells us that 1 in 30 people have the virus. That is a staggering piece of news. The rates in Lewisham are higher than they have ever been at just below 1000 per every 100,000 people. Lewisham currently has 92% hospital bed capacity taken up which means that we are close to being overwhelmed. With all this information the only sensible course of action is to stay indoors whenever possible and keep our families safe. We are eternally grateful to all those critical workers who have no option but to continue working in order to support the country's response to this pandemic.

### **PTA / PSA**

Our fabulous PTA has run for many years and serves the School in a wide range of ways. They offer social opportunities for us to come together as a community and they also raise much needed funds for our School. We have always been called the PTA – Parent Teacher Association, going forward we are going to change the name to PSA – Parent Staff Association. This is much more inclusive and takes account of all our fabulous support staff: premises, office and TAs, who help this wonderful organisation so very much.

### **Instruments**

If your child has a musical instrument at home then please ensure that they are continuing to practise each day to maintain their skills. By the time we come out of lockdown we may have a full orchestra to listen to!

### **Lewisham Libraries**

Whilst libraries remain closed, there are many books available via their e-books system. You can find out more at: <https://lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/libraries/elibrary>

## **BBC Learning**

From Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January BBC are also providing on-line learning, you can find it at:  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/dailylessons>

## **Questionnaire responses**

Thank you to all those who completed questionnaires at the end of last term. We sent out a response letter earlier this week. Your views are very important to us and help us to improve the School – we are always looking to get better!

## **Birthday treats**

As a result of the questionnaire responses the idea of birthday treats were considered. We have decided that when we are all back at School we will no longer allow children to bring a packet of sweets in to celebrate their birthday with the class. This could add up to thirty additional bags of sweets for each child per academic year and is unnecessary sugar intake for our children. We all want our children to be healthy so let us begin this new year by helping them all. Thank you for your cooperation in this. Any sweets handed into School by parents who forget our new rule will be returned home.

## **Thank you**

I always think that our staff are fabulous but this week they have surpassed even their own high standards. Our staff have been amazing, adjusting to new expectations, preparing new online learning and doing all this with smiles on their faces. They are a team to be proud of and I thank them from the bottom of my heart.

In these strange and worrying times I urge you to stay safe and look after each other. With vaccines on their way, please God, there is light at the end of this very dark tunnel.

Miss Collins

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*“No act of kindness,  
no matter how small,  
is ever wasted”*

— Aesop.

## **A message from our Governing Body:**

In addition to the weekly updates from Miss Collins, we thought a twice termly message from the Aspire London Governing Body would be a simple way to connect with parents and carers to update you all on the Governing Body's role within the School community, which has been slightly different these past few months. We formally became a Federation of Holy Cross and St Augustine's on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020, and we have had Governing Board meetings twice a term via zoom ever since. I very much look forward to the first 'in person' Governor's meeting. In non-pandemic times the Governing Body performs a strategic function, overseeing the direction and development of the Federation, by monitoring and challenging the progress of the children, the staff and the School. At present, as the current pandemic continues, the Federation's primary concern remains the safety, welfare and education of all the children at our Schools and the safety and welfare of our staff. The Senior Leadership Team and the Governing Body are in regular contact and we support the Senior Leadership Team across the Federation in their response to the situation, in the face of constantly changing Government guidelines. The Governing Body also very much appreciates the continued support the School staff are receiving from parents and carers. Please stay safe and thank you.

Tara Nelson, Chair of Governors