

Milton St. John's CE Primary School

Newsletter

Wednesday 2 December

Remember to subscribe to the newsletter on our website to receive an electronic copy.

NEW NEWSLETTER ITEMS

Parents Questionnaire

We have sent a text message out to everybody on Monday asking if parents will complete a questionnaire to help school improve further. We normally have a paper copy available of this questionnaire at Parents Evening but due to Covid and the changing times we have sent it in this format instead. It doesn't take long to complete, only a couple of minutes of your time. We would really appreciate this being completed and submitted by Friday 4 December at the latest.

Drop off in a morning

Please be reminded that school drop off times for Reception to Year 6 are between 8.40 – 9am. At 9am the doors are closed. Myself, Mrs Galvin or Mrs Phillips stay at each of the gates in the main school in a morning until the bell goes. If an adult is not around at the gates when your child arrives, this will signal that all of the doors have all been shut for health and safety reasons and that school has started. Obviously please avoid arriving late for school, but any children in the main school arriving after this time will need to be escorted to the main entrance by the adult dropping them off.

In Year 1 and Reception you will need to knock on the classroom doors and wait for an adult please.

Snow during Covid restrictions

Given the recent national weather forecasts, we are very aware that snow is coming at some point – possibly before Christmas. Historically, we have not had to close the school very often, as we normally had several staff who were able to walk in and help support others in school. During such occasions classes are usually mixed together in the hall or in classrooms until sufficient staff are able to get in. **However, this year, with Covid and the restricted movement of children/staff around school and between bubbles (classes); this will not be possible and there is a greater possibility that school may have to shut and learning move online because of this.**

It is very important to try and keep the school open, whenever it is possible, and we would like to take this opportunity to explain what will happen if we have snow.

- The school regularly checks the local weather stations and liaises with the Local Authority to gauge whether there is likelihood that there will be a heavy snowfall. Unfortunately, the accuracy of the forecast is not always correct and there could be a heavier snowfall than predicted and this can sometimes catch people out.
- The school has quite a number of staff who live outside the Mossley area. If there is not enough qualified staff available for each of the bubbles (classes) to come into school to open and manage the school safely, **then it cannot open due to health & safety grounds.**
- School also has to consider if the roads are dangerous then we may not receive any food deliveries. The school does not hold a large food reserve; therefore, if the snow is likely to cause disruption over a number of days, the school will not be able to provide a hot meal at lunch time.
- If the school boilers fail to operate, we need to call out technical services and arrange for a qualified engineer to repair the fault. The school would close if we are not able to heat the building. If the heating goes off during the day a judgement would be made about school closure and contacting parents.

We **S**how respect. We are **H**onest. We **I**nclude others. We **N**ever give up. We seek **E**xcellence in all we do.

How you will be kept informed

1. If necessary, a decision to close will be made no later than 8.00am on the morning of closure. We have to rely on the Site Manager and communication between staff about whether they are able to get in before a decision can be made. If we are able to inform you before this time, we will, but we always try our utmost to open and never take this decision lightly. **We will inform you of this decision by text.** Should our text messaging service fail (which can sometimes be the case when a number of schools are using the same system at the same time), the school website will be updated and teachers will inform you on class dojo as soon as they can (please be aware that staff may be trying to get into school at this point).
2. If there is a heavy fall of snow during the day, we will keep parents informed via text should the children need picked up early.

Text messaging is a vital means in which we contact parents so please could you make sure that we have an up-to-date contact number. If you have recently renewed your mobile this is particularly important!

UPDATED NEWSLETTER ITEMS

Christmas Toy appeal

We have been approached by a number of parents about whether we are accepting donations of new toys/gifts that can be distributed to the community. We understand that a number of radio stations are currently doing this also. Therefore, if anyone would like to donate new gifts/toys before 11 December please send them into school and we will distribute them. It would help if anything that was brought in was placed in a gift bag (not wrapped please), but this is not essential.

Staff gifts

Every year the staff are overwhelmed and very grateful with the number of gifts that are given to staff at Christmas and throughout the year. However, the staff would like to give you the 'gift of not giving' them anything this Christmas! Please do not be offended by this and, of course, the staff will always accept anything, but staff wanted parents to know that it really is ok not to send gifts in this year. An alternative may be to send something in for our Foodbank or Toy appeal if you would like to, but please be assured that we are aware that so many families are affected this year and we do not want any additional burdens on families to get staff a present this Christmas.

Milton St John's Foodbank

We are aware that for some people, approaching us for a foodbank parcel, can be very difficult. To make it a little easier parents/carers can email admin@milton-st-johns.tameside.sch.uk to request one. No explanation would be needed, all that we require is that you indicate the number of people in the household that you would need a parcel for so that we can supply enough food. We would then get in touch with you, no questions asked, and organise a convenient time to pick up a parcel. We have a really well stocked foodbank now and would love to be able to distribute it, so please get in touch.

Staffing Update

On the 14 December we welcome Mrs Tann back from her maternity leave. She will be teaching Year 3 Monday – Thursday, Mrs Leaney will continue to teach Year 3 on a Friday and cover any planning, preparation and assessment time for Mrs Tann. Miss Johnson, and Mrs Leaney have already been involved with transition discussions with Mrs Tann and will also continue to do this when she returns.

Updated Christmas activities

As previously mentioned we are planning a number of activities in the run up to Christmas and are hoping to do some kind of play/concert with the children that we can film for parents to see. However, our plans could be disrupted easily with classes having to isolate, just as we have experienced with year 6 recently. Anything we do organise will not be as 'epic' as previous years but we hope to bring you something festive from the children. We will also be filming this ourselves so please do not expect a blockbuster with amazing visual effects!

Festive Fridays – every Friday in December the children will take part in festive arts/crafts etc and will be able to wear a festive accessory on these days to make them a little more special. Eg, a hairband/badges/tinsel/festive socks.

Friday 11 December - the children can wear a festive jumper or non-school uniform for a donation of £1 for Save the Children Jumper Day! This will be payable on Schoolmoney on this day.

Christmas Cards – So that we still have a little magic and can spread kindness in the lead up to Christmas, the children can still send Christmas cards, if they would like to. Each class will have a Christmas post box so that the children can post their cards. Cards will need to be brought in between the dates of 30 November and 9 December so that they can be quarantined before being given out the last week of half term.

Oldham Coliseum Visitor/Virtual Pantomime

Good news - In the last week of the half term we have arranged for a visitor from the Coliseum to bring some sparkle in a safe way into school over the festive period (unless restrictions or illness prevents this). We have also booked a virtual pantomime for the children to watch at some point during the week too.

PTA Christmas fundraising and spreading cheer!

The PTA are selling lovely star Christmas decorations that the children can decorate at home for £1.50. These would make lovely gifts. They are also selling a lantern template, again for the children to decorate at home, that we then hope will be put in people's windows to spread a light of hope this Christmas. It would be lovely for the children to spot Milton's Lanterns of Hope in lots of windows over the festive period. A Lantern template is 50p. Unfortunately, as these items will be ordered in an ad hoc way we are unable to add this to our online money system, therefore money will have to be sent in an envelope clearly stating what items you would like and your child's name/ year group please.



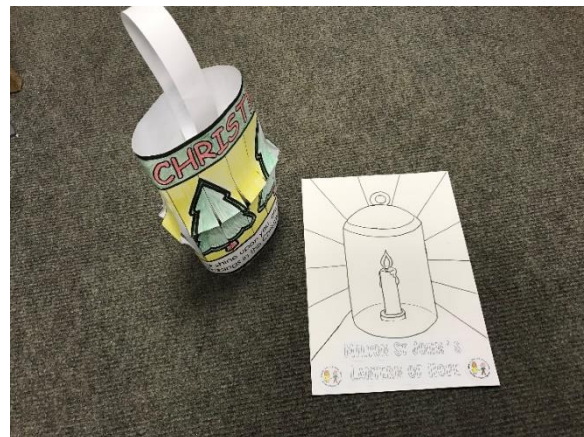
For information - The wooden stars come in two flat pieces so they are easy to decorate with paints, pens, sequins, glitter, ribbon, wrapping paper – it's all up to you! Once you have decorated your stars you will need to carefully slide the pieces together, and they may need a touch of glue.



Add the golden string and they are ready to hang on the tree!

The PTA are also selling lantern templates for 50p. For 50p the children will get two templates which they can colour and decorate. We are hoping that families display the 2d 'lantern of hope' picture in their windows for all to see and hang their 3d lantern somewhere in your homes.

Share a photo on your Class Dojo portfolio to show your teacher your finished design.



Lockdown

Please note the following reminders:

Please remember that only one adult is allowed to collect and drop off children.

If a member of the household has symptoms and has to have a test, **the whole household must isolate until the results come back.**

Should your child test positive, it is imperative that we are informed straight away, either by phone (during school hours) or via the positivecovid@milton-st-johns.tameside.sch.uk email address (out of school hours; after 3.30pm or during the weekends). Please do not presume that we will have been informed by track and trace. Please include the following information in the email or conversation:

Name of child

Class

Date symptoms started

Date child was last in school

Date that a test was taken

Also include if your child attended Skools Out and the date they attended

We have to have the above information to be able to liaise with Public Health England and ascertain what we have to do in each circumstance. We have to follow their advice at all times and the information above is critical in working out isolation dates if classes have to isolate. We have been informed that we have to track back 48 hours prior to the onset of symptoms and determine who may have been in contact during those hours.

Colder weather

The weather is clearly getting colder. This will certainly become even more challenging as the weather deteriorates. Current guidelines state that the windows in frequently used rooms must be open to allow adequate ventilation throughout the room. Therefore, please ensure your child has warm, protective clothing for outside and please consider dressing the children in thermal undergarments. Additional to this, the children are also allowed to wear gilets/body warmer type clothing in class should they need to (please do not worry about the colour matching the uniform colours in this case).

Easy Fund Raising

Since we are unable to have our Christmas Fair etc this year, we have registered with Easyfundraising.org website to enable parents/carers to help us raise funds at no extra cost to themselves. This is easy to do! When you shop online, with over 4100 of your favourite retailers, including John Lewis & Partners, Amazon, eBay, Argos etc, you can raise FREE donations to Milton St John's CE.

It only takes a few minutes to sign up and is then easy to use by finding the retailer you want to shop with on the Easyfundraising website or App, shop as usual and the retailer will donate to us when you make a purchase – at no extra cost to you!

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Sign up for free at:

https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/miltonstjohnsprimary/?utm_campaign=raise-more&utm_content=s-n3

Dates for your Diary

Fri 11 December	Save the Children Christmas Jumper/Non uniform day
Wed 16 December	Christmas Dinner Day
Fri 25-Mon 28 June 2021	Year 6 Kingswood residential trip

Reception September 2021

Applications for Reception class for September 2021 is open from 1 November 2020 until 15 January 2021.



As we are now in Advent season and are counting down to Christmas, may we think about those who may find Christmas difficult this year.