



17th December 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

This is our last week in school for this term. School closes for the Christmas holidays on **Friday, 18th December at 1:30 for Reception to Year 6 and on Thursday, 17th December at 11:30 for Nursery.**

Monday 4th January and Tuesday, 5th January are teacher training days so the school will re-open on Wednesday, 6th 2021 as normal.

This has been a very challenging term in many ways. I would like to thank the staff for their hard work and dedication, the parents for their continued support and the children for being the kind, caring and resilient individuals that they have been.

Though the holidays officially begin on the 18th December; we will continue to monitor the school email account (admin@st-michaels.newham.sch.uk). **If your child tests positive over the Christmas period, please email the school as soon as possible so we can notify everyone affected.**

During this third week of the Advent season, we ask for God's blessing on each of us.

Loving and gracious God,

May this time of awaiting the coming of your Son draw us ever closer to you and those around us, especially our families. May we be present to you, listen to you, and be open to your will for us, so that we may truly be people of faith who bring your love and light to others.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all our families a Merry Christmas and a healthy 2021!

Change to the School Calendar

After a thorough review of the current phonics and early reading provision, we will be changing the current programme that the school uses to teach phonics. In the new year, we will begin to use the Read Write Inc (RWI) programme which is used by many schools in the local authority with great success. Read Write Inc is a structured synthetic phonics programme - designed to ensure all children learn to read accurately and fluently. Comprehensive planning is provided for teachers so they can channel their energy and creativity into teaching fun and engaging lessons. In order to implement this phonics programme all staff need to be trained therefore we will be adding an additional inset day to our calendar; **so the school will be closed to pupils on the 4th**

and 5th January 2021 and will re-open on Wednesday, 6th January 2021. In order to make this day up we will return one day earlier from our Easter break on Wednesday, 14th April 2021.

School Bags

We realize that the children have found it very difficult not taking home reading books. The school has invested in lots of books to develop children's reading independence and to develop their love of reading, so it's really important that we are able to share these books with the children. As a result, from Wednesday 6th January 2021, we will return to having school bags in school. The children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are encouraged to have the St Michael's school bag; children in years 3-6 may bring a school rucksacks; however, bags will be used only for reading books and essential letters/notices at this point. Due to the current circumstances, we need to try to mitigate any risks associated with bringing in items from home; therefore, we will not be sending home reading records at this point for parents to sign and return when they have read with their children. **Reading books will be handed out/changed on Mondays only and need to be returned on Thursdays only. Books will not be dealt with outside of these times.**

Christmas Cards

Unfortunately, we are not able to allow the exchange of Christmas cards this academic year due to the current circumstances. I realize that some parents may want to exchange gifts with other children or thank the teachers with a token Christmas gift; we will permit this to happen in the spirit of the season. However, the staff do not expect gifts and would be perfectly happy with just a kind word that acknowledges their effort particularly at this difficult time.

Christmas Lunch

The children have a fantastically festive time during their Christmas lunch on Wednesday. While many things have had to change this year due to our current situation, it was lovely that they were able to have one of the activities they really enjoy.

Coronavirus Update

London borough are in tier 3 from Wednesday, 16th December, please ensure that you are familiar with the rules within this tier for everyone's safety. We need to continue to be vigilant to ensure that we all remain safe. Please continue to support the school rules and expectations to keep us all safe:

- Please ensure that you are practicing social distancing at the gate in the morning and for pick up at the end of the day.
- Parents need to drop off and collect their children promptly.
 - ❖ Nursery - 8:30 - 11:30
 - ❖ Reception - 8:30 - 3:05
 - ❖ Years 1 and 2 - 8:40 - 3:15
 - ❖ Years 3 and 4 - 8:40 - 3:15
 - ❖ Year 5 and 6 - 8:50 - 3:25

Please do not enter the school premises if you or a member of your household are showing symptoms of coronavirus; this includes if you are waiting for a test result. The most common symptoms of coronavirus are recent onset of:

- a new continuous cough and/or
- a high temperature and/or
- a loss, or change in, your normal sense of test of smell (anosmia)

If your child does develop symptoms at any point during the school year you should seek advice from NHS 111 at [https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/or by phoning 111](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/or-by-phoning-111).

If a child has symptoms of coronavirus they should get a test. If this is not possible, then the child should self-isolate for 10 days. If your child is not in school, please call the school to let us know why they are not in school so we can track absences and follow up as appropriate. **If your child is off with coronavirus symptoms we need to know for the safety of the entire school community.**

God Bless.



N. Scott
Head Teacher