



St Anthony's Catholic Primary School

A Voluntary Academy



Dunkery Road, Wythenshawe, Manchester, M22 0NT
Tel: 0161 437 3029, Email: admin@st-anthonys.manchester.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mr P Johnson

22nd October 2020

First Holy Communion

Congratulations to the children who made their First Holy Communion last Saturday. Although this was not our usual celebration, I am sure you will agree that it was a beautiful service nonetheless. The children looked wonderful, and I ask that you continue to keep them in your prayers as they proceed along their Faith journey. Thank you to all the staff and parents for their support in preparing for this Sacrament, especially to Mrs Sherry, Mrs Johnson, Mr Goodwin, Miss Phillips and Mr Glynn who worked tirelessly leading up to Saturday.

MUGA Pitch

Over half term, work will begin on installing a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) on part of the field. In layman's terms, a 5-a-side astro-turf pitch. We have accelerated the installation of this to provide more playground space and extra pick up space at these difficult times. Thank you to Mr Ablett, School Site Manager, Mrs Heywood, School Business Manager, and the Trust Directors for ensuring the swift work on this.

Covid -19 Update

Many thanks for continuing to support school with the procedures we have in place and for following the guidelines set out by Public Health England. We try our utmost not to send bubbles/whole year groups home, and any decision to do so is on the advice of Public Health England and is an absolute last resort. May I take this opportunity to remind you that if your child is sent home to self-isolate, they must remain at home until the date indicated in their letter sent out via ParentApps. Children must not be socialising with their peers, visiting friends/family, shopping etc. It is our responsibility as a school community to ensure we are all playing our part in following the guidelines.

Parking

Please could I remind parents to be considerate when parking in the local area. I understand the difficulties with parking space around school, but please ensure you are parking safely and without blocking access to our neighbour's driveways.

Parents' Evening

We have had several enquiries regarding Parents' Evening. Due to the current pandemic, we are unable to hold face to face meetings; however, we will be sending out written reports in November.

Harvest

We have been overwhelmed with the response to our request for donations for the Harvest Appeal. We really appreciate that although these are difficult times for many families, you have been exceptionally generous. These donations are being split between The Wythenshawe Food Bank and Catholic Social Action Wythenshawe and will make a huge difference to many families in Wythenshawe.

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Parent Questionnaire Responses

At the start of the year the Trust sent out an online questionnaire asking for your thoughts on the Covid situation and how this is affecting school. We had 346 responses which is just over half of the families within school. The results are outlined in the table below:

Question/ Statement	Yes	No
I am happy that my child's school has now reopened to all pupils	96%	4%
I am happy with the measures which the school has put in place to reduce the transmission of Coronavirus	90%	10%
I am happy that my child is settling back in well into the school's expected routines and behaviours	99%	1%
My child is getting help with any learning that they are finding difficult after lockdown	90%	10%
My child is able to speak to an adult at school if they are worried about something	94%	6%
If there is a local lockdown, I am happy that the school's remote learning offer will ensure they continue to make progress with their learning at home	88%	12%

As you can see, it shows an overwhelmingly positive response from the parents who completed the questionnaire. Thank you to all the parents who responded. We have had a number of points raised which will help us with our planning moving forward. It is good to know that we have parents who are happy with what we've done with quotes such as:

- "School has been amazing, phased drop off and pick up working well."
- "I did have concerns but they were soon put to rest when I saw the measures school had put in place."
- "I am very pleased at how smooth the transition back to school has been."

In saying this, we do understand that the Lockdown put a lot of pressures on families and school, which has inevitably led to some frustrations regarding the enforced changes made to school. These frustrations come under six broad categories:

- Pickup Procedures
- Social Distancing
- Access from Culmere Road
- Opportunities to Communicate with Teachers
- Home Learning
- After School Club



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Below I outline the school's position and possible solutions. I am mindful that I need to manage parent expectations; therefore, please remember the Possible Next Steps' section are possible but not guaranteed next steps.

Broad Discussion Point	Current Position	Possible Next Steps
Pickup Procedures	The pickup procedures have been fully risk assessed and evaluated by the Trust and Manchester City Council. Both have found that our procedures are best fit for this moment in time. We understand that the pickup is not ideal as we have to put control measures in place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Half termly review of pickup procedures. • Liase with the Diocese of Shrewsbury, the landowners, regarding installing more access gates.
Social Distancing	<p>A number of parents are concerned regarding social distancing.</p> <p>The pickup window at the end of the school day is from 2.45pm to 3pm. Problems have occurred because parents are all coming at 2.45pm. If you are concerned with regards to social distancing, please avoid being here at 2.45pm prompt.</p> <p>We cannot stipulate and will not police the wearing of masks by parents at home time. If you want to wear a mask, we are more than happy for you to do so.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend plans based on the space created by the MUGA pitch. • Parents to review their own pick up times to avoid congestion.
Access from Culmery Road	<p>We ask parents to come through Culmery Road because of the limited access from the Reception playground to the Key Stage 1 playground. Again we know this is not ideal; however, it is the widest space we have to accommodate the 700 families we have in school.</p> <p>Currently we are in discussions with the Diocese of Shrewsbury regarding installing an additional access gate.</p>	
Opportunities to Communicate with Teachers	<p>During lockdown, we introduced Class Dojo as a means of communication. This worked whilst distance learning was taking place, with teachers' time dedicated to this task. As teachers have returned to the classroom their capacity to communicate via Class Dojo is limited when you consider there are classes of 30 or more pupils.</p> <p>We have welcomers on the gate in the morning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents will have to reconnect with Class Dojo with the new login details provided. • Any parent



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	to collect any messages for the class teachers and there is an opportunity at the end of the day to speak with the class teacher once all the children have been collected.	having difficulty accessing online learning, please contact the school as soon as possible.
Home Learning	<p>As per Government expectations, we have written a remote learning procedure which comes into practice after half term. This procedure is in line with our offer during lockdown. We have a blended approach of home learning packs and online learning. In the first 24 hours we will be expecting children to undertake work based on the "homework books" which we used last year. Each child will be given a new book in November so they have a fall back in case they have to isolate straight away. Following this, teachers will provide work online which links to the learning that will take place in the classroom. If your child has to self-isolate and the rest of the class are in school, we will contact you periodically during this time via Class Dojo.</p> <p>When year group or classes have to self-isolate as a whole, class teachers will be in contact each day via Class Dojo.</p>	
After School Club	In order to start the after school club provision, we need to ensure it will be Covid compliant. We thank you for your patience and hope that you understand that to develop aspects of school in these Covid times is problematic. Please be assured that we are working on restarting this facility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ongoing review of after school provision, including further parent voice activity.

Outdoor Learning and Erasmus Funding

Erasmus is the European Union Programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport. We applied to Erasmus for funding to develop our outdoor learning provision, and have been successful in securing a substantial amount of money. This grant will be used for staff participation in order to deliver a diverse and exciting curriculum (we have started with Forest School, see later in the newsletter). From this, we aim to be a hub school in the area, through supporting other schools with their outdoor educational programmes. If you would like any further information on the Erasmus programme, please follow the link:

<https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/#search/project/keyword=St%20Anthony's%20&matchAllCountries=false>

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As part of our current outdoor learning programme, Mrs Lindsey and Mr Moghadasnia have recently completed their Level 3 and Level 2 training respectively for Forest School. They are both really eager to develop Forest School and initially this will be via working with small groups to ensure that we are keeping within the guidelines and ensuring that the risk assessments we have in place are working.

South Africa Partnership:

As you may remember, Mr Johnson and Miss Seymour visited South Africa in March to share best practice in teaching sustainability and to compare teaching strategies. This was with a cluster of schools from across the North West. From this trip, we have expanded our network of schools in South Africa by developing a new Trust cluster. Our cluster will be holding a Multi-School Olympics, with the staff from the Mehlareng Combined Farm School, with a focus on peace, justice and equality in sport. This will hopefully be taking place in June 2021.

We have introduced a new curriculum into school this year called Dimensions Curriculum. In this we have mapped out global learning opportunities, opportunities to teach the children about the sustainable development goals and we have linked these with Catholic Social Teaching.

School Garden

Many thanks to Mr Austin for building the gazebo in the school garden to ensure that children are sheltered in their outdoor learning lessons. Mr Austin gave up his time at weekends and in the evenings to ensure this was completed. The garden has really developed over the last twelve months with several beds, a separate area for growing fruit like strawberries, a poly tunnel which unfortunately is out of use due to Covid. All children will have the opportunity to make use of this area throughout the year.

School Website

The new school website was launched last week and I am sure you will agree that it looks fantastic. We aimed to make the site more user friendly and hope that you have found it to be so. If you have yet to take a look at the new site, please use the following link to access it: <https://www.stanthonysrcprimaryschool.co.uk/>

Staff News

Congratulations to Mr Glynn who has recently been appointed as Deputy Headteacher at St Anthony's, and to Miss Simmons who has been appointed Deputy Headteacher at St Elizabeth's. I am also pleased to announce that Mrs C Burns has been appointed as Assistant Headteacher at St Anthony's. All three promotions are richly deserved, and we wish them all a very successful future.

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Reflection

The motto that is on our school badge is, *Dirige Sancte Antoni – Guide Us St Anthony*. We are a community of prayer and we teach the children that we should follow the words of St Anthony, ***“Let your words teach and your actions speak.”***

We are all aware that 2020 has been a difficult year, a national and international crisis. Covid 19 has put pressures on us all at St Anthony's: as individuals, children, parents, teachers, non-teaching staff, priests, families, parish and the school community as a whole. In saying this, we must remember that by keeping together, we will get through this unprecedented time - ***Dirige Sancte Antoni***.

Autumn Prayer

O God of Creation, you have blessed us with the changing of the seasons. Remind us to take time to rest. Remind us of the wonder of your creation. Remind us that it is you who give us the breath of life.

All Blessings

Mr Peter Johnson
Headteacher