



"Let us not tire of preaching love; it is the force that will overcome the world."

St. Oscar Romero

Dear parents/ carers

It was not the week any of us expected! COVID cases started to come through on Friday evening and have done ever since!

Despite this, it has been a great week in school. It has been lovely to start to get to know your children more and to start to meet some of you.

I wanted to get this letter out today with the information about COVID and the updated uniform information. We will aim to get a further letter out tomorrow or early next week with as many dates for the school year ahead on – including Parents Evenings, masses and liturgies, sports days, leavers events, residential as well as provisional dates for transition and end of year reports. We hope – as I know you will – that parents will be able to return to these events sooner rather than later and that parents evenings will be – again – face to face.

COVID:

After managing to stay mostly COVID-free as a school throughout the pandemic, it has finally found it's way into the building. Thank you to everyone for their understanding – and for increased testing of your children. As well as having a significant minority of children off with COVID – with cases now in every class, we do have some staff members absent. This may mean that staffing in your child's class is not as expected – we are doing all we can to maintain consistency!

Please remember, some children feeling poorly with cold-like symptoms may be COVID positive but testing negative on a lateral flow test. If you think your child may have COVID but they are testing negative – please do look to get a PCR test.

As a result of the COVID cases in school, we have cancelled face to face whole school worship and are making extra efforts to keep downstairs and upstairs children separate – including at breaks and lunchtime and staff are continuing to wear masks in communal areas.



St. Joseph's Catholic Voluntary Academy
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**St Ralph
Sherwin**
Catholic Multi Academy Trust



Lateral Flow Tests are available via gov.uk [here](#) (if these are unavailable - keep trying they do seem to 'restock' at various times through the day)

And are often available for collection in town at pharmacists (eg Boots), the library and the town hall.

PCR tests can be booked on gov.uk [here](#)

Please see the picture on the right which confirms the details of isolation following a positive test and when further tests should be done to allow a return to school. I would suggest a morning test on day 5 as, if that is negative, a test early on day 6 would allow a return to school on day 6 (please remember there must be 24 hours between these tests....)

Please be aware, despite this rise in cases, that if your children are well, there is the expectation that they are in school.

Uniform:

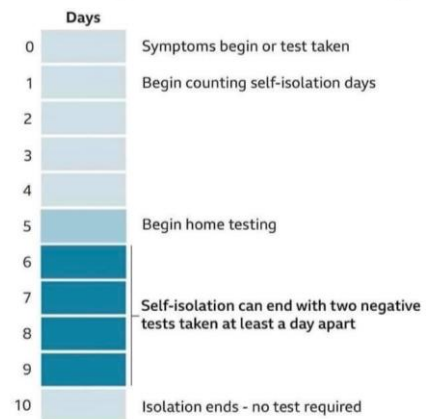
The governors reviewed an updated uniform policy for the school at their meeting this week. It is available to view [here](#). It reflects the move to PE kits on PE days – and clarifies expectations. Please take a few moments to remind yourselves about these expectations. I have asked staff to challenge incorrect uniform around school.

We are very aware that some items of uniform can be expensive. There is no expectation that uniform items should all be 'branded'.

The St Ralph Sherwin trust do also have a hardship fund for parents who are finding it difficult to afford uniform as well as trips. There is link to the hardship fund application in the Uniform Policy and it is also [here](#). Forms used to request support are available in the office and please don't feel embarrassed if you do need to ask – discretion is assured, and we are here to help. If you would like to speak to someone about this in confidence, please see Mrs Shirley.

- Day '0' is when tested positive or symptoms
- 5 days isolation
- 2 clear LFTs - can return to work/school
- 1 clear, 1 not, continue to isolate until after day 10
- After Day 10, you can come out of isolation
- Family to do daily LFT

How five-day isolation rule works in England





We would like to start to offer a free uniform exchange somewhere on school soon for school branded items where parents would be able to come and get second hand uniform as and when their children grow. No payment required; no need to bring to take..... if you have branded school uniform that your children have outgrown that still has life left for another child to use, please donate this to the office. We will let parents know when this is up and running. (Initially we would only like to collect school branded items – thank you)

As ever, if there is anything you need either drop me an email, send me a Dojo or catch me before/ after school – I will try to get outside at the start of the day as often as I can!

God bless

Mr Lobb

Don't forget! We now have a fabulous school nursery! If you have children aged 3 and over (or who are approaching this age) – get in touch with Mrs Allen for the details..... we have a very flexible offer that should suit most families.

Tell your friends and let's grow the St Joseph's family!



St Joseph's Nursery

Welcoming children age 3+ to our warm and friendly nursery.

We have places available at our new school nursery which offers your child the very best start in life. Please contact us on the details below to find out more.



**St Ralph
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