




St Peter's Catholic School



National Teaching School
designated by

National College for
Teaching & Leadership

Faith is our Foundation

Headteacher: Mrs M.E. Murphy



St. Peter's Catholic School
Whitefields Road, Solihull B91 3NZ
Tel: 0121 705 3988
E-mail: office@st-peters.solihull.sch.uk
www.st-peters.solihull.sch.uk

Archdiocese of Birmingham
Metropolitan Borough of Solihull

Friday 29th January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

Following the Government announcement this week, we have learnt that school will be closed to all but children of critical workers and vulnerable children until at least Monday 8th March. We know how difficult this time is for all our pupils and thank you for your continued support with the Teams lessons and work being completed at home. As soon as we have any further information regarding a potential return date, we will share this with you.

February half-term – Monday 15th to Friday 19th February

Please be aware the Department for Education released this information this week, regarding school being open for children of critical workers and vulnerable children, as well as free school meal vouchers during February half-term:

'Schools will close as usual over February half-term and are not expected to remain open to vulnerable children and the children of critical workers during that week.'

Schools do not need to provide lunch parcels or vouchers during the February half-term. There is wider government support in place to support families and children outside of term-time through the [Covid Winter Grant Scheme](#). The £170 million scheme is being run by local authorities in England, with at least 80% of the funding earmarked to support with food and essential utility costs and will cover the period to the end of March 2021. It will allow local authorities to directly help the hardest-hit families and individuals over the winter period. Local authorities have local ties and knowledge, making them best placed to identify and help those children and families most in need.'

Awarding of grades

As I mentioned last week, the government are holding a consultation on how grades for Year 11 and Year 13 should be awarded. I would urge all pupils and parents to have their say by clicking [this link](#). The consultation closes at 23:45 tonight.

Testing

St Peter's testing centre is working very successfully. To date, our brilliant testing team has conducted 342 tests for staffing using the Lateral Flow Devices (LFD). Over 50 children of critical workers have also been tested. We have reported no positive tests. We would like to thank our professional and efficient testing



team and also the children who have been tested, for their maturity. If any parent would like to see our risk assessment, please contact the school office.

Message from the English Department

The National Literacy Trust have teamed up with Oak Academy to create a virtual library. <https://library.thenational.academy/>. Each week they are offering a free book to read virtually and this is accompanied with some fun learning activities, a quiz and a video of the author talking.

Homework

Thank you to those parents who have contacted us about homework during the remote learning lockdown period. We have listened to your feedback and the following changes will come into play from Monday 1st February 2021:

KS3 Pupils

Homework will be set but this is to be purely optional. Teachers will set homework that should provide enjoyment and interest for those keen to learn more but will not form part of the programme of study, or St Peter's KS3 curriculum. Teachers will set research and project-based learning, creative tasks, online quizzes, self-quizzing, reading, blogs, video links etc. They will be very happy to see what pupils have been up to, but they may not have the capacity to give detailed feedback.

KS4 and KS5 Pupils

To keep pupils focused and motivated teachers will continue to set homework for all pupils, and this is not optional at this important stage. Again, this may not be in the traditional form and may involve self-quizzing, revision for low stakes tests, knowledge organisers, reading etc. These are all legitimate and useful for moving knowledge from working to long term memory and improving recall. Teaching staff will aim for a blend of screen based and off-screen activities to allow the pupils a screen break if possible. We are mindful that the pupils, like many adults, may find sitting at a screen all day tiring and monotonous.

Catholic Life

On 27th January 1945, Red Army troops liberated the Nazi Concentration and Death Camp, Auschwitz in Poland. This date has since been assigned as Holocaust Memorial Day. In school, a virtual Assembly around the theme of the Holocaust was a sombre but important reflection on the importance of remembering this most evil crimes of the 20th Century and how it should be warning against racism and discrimination in the present day. The Gospel reading chosen was a seemingly unusual choice, Jesus and the Samaritan women who met at the well. However, by Jesus asking the lady for a drink, he was breaking down entrenched societal racism and interacting with somebody who most would have shunned through prejudice and racism. Jesus' message was a simple one – we should treat others as we find them and to quote Martin Luther King, we should judge people “by the colour of their character, not the colour of their skin”. As we reflected in school and at home on horrors of the Holocaust, we hope and pray that this wisdom is received by all. [The link to the Assembly is here.](#)

Racial Justice Sunday, 31st January:

The Bishops' Conference website have shared this message *'This year's Racial Justice Sunday is more important than ever. The effects of the Coronavirus pandemic, the killing of George Floyd, and the powerful message on fraternity and equality by Pope Francis in [Fratelli Tutti](#) speak of the need to actively oppose racism and pursue racial justice with renewed vigour.'* There is also a message from Bishop Paul MacAleenan (Lead Bishop for Racial Justice). <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/events/racial-justice-sunday-2021/>

Year 12 Careers Resources from University of Birmingham

UCAS applications have now been submitted for Year 13 and we are continuing to guide Year 12 for their future pathways also. The University of Birmingham have sent links to videos which are worthwhile for Year 12 pupils to watch; please see links below:

- [Year 12 Pathways to Birmingham programmes](#)
- [The benefits of university](#)
- [Choosing a university and course](#)
- [Student finance](#)
- [Writing personal statements](#)
- [University of Birmingham Drone Campus Tour](#)

In the UCAS personal statements, universities look to see if pupils show whether their knowledge and passion for their chosen course is superficial or shows evidence of independent learning. This is very important for those pupils who have not been able to do much in the line of extra-curricular hobbies, and volunteering, during the pandemic. 'Super curricular' will show that pupils have used their initiative. The academic staff at the University have put together some subject specific [academic resources](#) to enrich the curriculum and to support the transition of students from school to university. They cover a large range of subject areas and will be of interest to Year 12 pupils who may be looking to explore subjects in more detail prior to university study or to help support their current learning.

Over the coming weeks they are also running [live webinars](#) covering general topics and subject specific sessions. These are free but Year 12 pupils do need to book on so get onto it! Furthermore, there is also a collection of videos called [Shape Your Future](#) which has involved current University of Birmingham students interviewing academics about contemporary issues, from the Black Lives Matter protests to Social Media.

For pupils considering healthcare degrees and careers (**medicine, dentistry, dental hygiene/therapy, nursing, pharmacy and biomedical sciences**) the University of Birmingham have a number of [specific resources available](#) that will help guide them towards their career goals.

Some pupils may also be interested in Birmingham University's [EPS Future Foundation Year](#) which is a fully-funded Foundation Year aimed at students interested in Science and Engineering. Further information on the course and eligibility can be found [here](#).

Finally their [Masterclass](#) series of webinars is running until 1st February and upcoming sessions will cover topics related to law, physiotherapy, human biology and dentistry.

For any further information on any of the above please email Careers@st-peters.solihull.sch.uk

There are a great range of other free university guidance resources to use:

- [Watch university guidance videos](#) - Uni Taster Days have created a university guidance video hub, where your child can watch webinars ranging from an introduction to university courses in Accounting through to Veterinary Science. As well as lots of subjects in between. They have recorded over 80 videos to date, featuring over 100 university speakers! Use this link to **[visit the on demand webinar hub](#)**.
- [Browse online university events](#) - If your child is seeking online opportunities directly, the Uni Taster Days events directory allows them to browse virtual open days, webinars, online subject tasters and chats - with new events added daily by universities UK-wide. Use this link to **[browse online university events](#)**.

Kooth introductory parent sessions

Kooth has set up two *Eventbrite* sessions, specifically aimed for parents in Solihull who want to know more about Kooth and how the service can support young people from 11-25 years.

- 23 February 2021 between 2pm and 3pm
- 10 March 2021 between 5pm and 6pm

The sessions will provide a brief overview of the service, how parents can effectively signpost their children to the site, how young people can sign up and access the different features and activities, together with a short demonstration of the site with time for any questions they may have.

[Kooth Parents' Sessions \(Solihull\)](#)

The link is to share and to register for one of the dates. Parents will need to have a free zoom account to access the session. The sessions are free and will only require a name and surname of the parent, they can then add their email address if they wish to, otherwise no further information is required.

The link is set to private so parents will not be able to find the session on Eventbrite. They will need to have seen the link through your internal communications and advertisements.

I hope you have a restful weekend.

Yours faithfully,



Mrs M E Murphy
Headteacher