



Message of the Week: I try to appreciate the beauty and wonder in the world around us

Dear parents, carers, friends and governors,

This weekend marks the first Sunday of Advent, the season of preparation for the celebration of Christmas. It will be a very different time this year and we have had to re-think the way we do some things. But will we still be able to enjoy this time and make it a special time for our pupils? Yes, of course we will, starting with our tree arriving and the switch on of our Christmas lights on Friday! Details of some of our plans are set out in this week's newsletter with further information to follow.

Covid Reminders

Thank you for wearing masks on the school yard at drop off/pick up time. Your support of this and other measures is much appreciated.

Can I clarify a couple of points:

- If you, or anyone within your household, has symptoms and is either waiting for a test or a test result, all household members should self-isolate during this period.
- If your child has to self-isolate because they have COVID-19 symptoms or have been a contact of a confirmed case they should not leave home during their isolation. Unfortunately this includes accompanying a sibling on a school journey. If no alternative way of getting the non-isolating sibling to school can be found, it will mean all siblings staying at home. Please contact school and remote learning will be provided.

We recognise that this is a very tough time for families within our community. And the strength of a community is evident in how we support others when they need it. If you are in isolation please do not hesitate to contact us - we may be able to help.

Christmas Gifts Message

We are blessed to work at St Catherine's with families who are always so generous in sending beautiful gifts at Christmas and summer.

At this time of year we realise that family budgets can be strained, this year even more so than usual, so we are asking that **no presents** are given this year.

If you would like to thank a particular member of staff a card, a letter or a drawing would be much appreciated. We hope this makes life a little bit easier for everyone as it is one less thing to think about.

Remember, you give us the best gift of all by allowing us to teach your child, God's gift.

Christmas Holiday Dates-a reminder

The Autumn Term ends for children at St Catherine's on Tuesday 22 December at 2pm and reopens for all on Thursday 7 January. This may be different to other local schools.



Academy Conversion

On 1 January 2021 the school officially becomes part of the Bishop Bewick Catholic Education Trust, one of 4 trusts across the Diocese to which every Catholic school will belong.

As part of that process we need to elect a new parent governor and we will soon be seeking nominations. We thank Zoe Robertson for her commitment and contribution during her term as Parent Governor to the work of the governing body and the school.

Applications for Reception Sept 2021

It is now possible for parents to apply for spaces in Reception Class for September 2021 at www.newcastle.gov.uk. The deadline for applications is 15 January 2021. Whilst we are currently restricting visits to the school we are happy to take any phone-calls or emails where we can direct prospective parents to further information.

Christmas Lunch

Kirstie, our school chef, is geared up and ready to roll out the Christmas Lunch for 200+ pupils and adults on Wed 16 December. Children who would normally take a packed lunch are able to change for that day- payment can be made through Parent Pay. We'll be eating lunch in our bubbles this year, but it will still be as tasty as ever.

Christmas Nativities (Nursery-Y6)

We'll be putting together special re-tellings of the Christmas story and sharing a link with you so that you can view. Whilst we won't be together to enjoy our shows you will be able to watch as a family in the comfort of your home.

Christmas-themed Clothing Day

Coming soon- our annual Christmas Jumper day. Please don't feel pressure to go out and buy a Christmas jumper- children can wear a Christmas jumper, socks, hairbands, PJs or something red or green, or even their own clothes. This year we'll be asking for donations of food for local food banks.

Christmas Raffle

There won't be a Christmas fair this year but you can win a magnificent Christmas hamper filled with Christmas goodies generously donated by school staff.

We'll not be sending out raffle tickets this year. However, to enter the raffle we are asking for a donation of £2 (or more if you want to) through Parent Pay which we'll put towards purchasing craft materials for Christmas and beyond.

Christmas Parties

Towards the end of term each class will enjoy a Christmas party. On this day children can wear their own clothes to school and we ask that each child brings in their own food. This can be pre-wrapped eg crisps, biscuits, fruit or wrapped in foil or clingfilm on a paper plate. Party food won't be refrigerated ahead of eating in the afternoon so please bear that in mind.

2020 Advent Calendar

Look out for this- coming your way every school day during Advent this year, starting Monday 30 November

Best wishes



Headteacher