



# St. Anthony's

SPECIALIST SCHOOL ●●●

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5<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

The week just appears to have gone so quickly as I feel it was just a minute ago, that I was writing last week's letter. We have been very busy this week getting plans sorted to welcome all pupils safely back into school. Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March we will welcome back all primary pupils into school. Secondary pupils who have not been in school will have been contacted to come into school to have two asymptomatic COVID tests, with plans in place to ensure all pupils are back in school on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> March. All staff and secondary pupils will then continue to have two tests per week, primary pupils are exempt from testing.

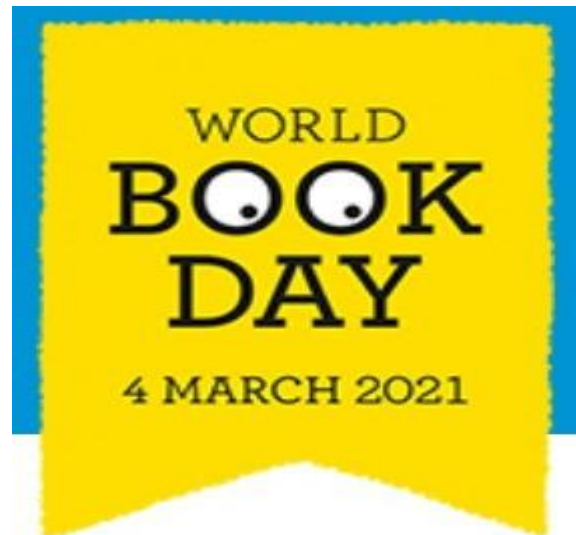
In the recent government guidance about 're-opening', it is recommended that secondary pupils only wear face coverings when in school, except in PE lesson or when eating, if social distancing cannot be maintained. We have taken advice and discussed in school and have decided this is not practical for our pupils. As we work in class groups, our movements around the school are limited and adults remain with the group, so the risk is limited. Along with the other control measures in place we feel confident that we are able to manage this risk. Staff will wear face coverings when moving around the school, in common areas and when on duty. If pupils wish to wear face coverings in lessons, this is fine. Please ensure that your child has face coverings, should they want to use them.

On school transport and KCC transport it is strongly recommended that pupils wear face coverings and, based on what I have seen, this is being followed by all our pupils.

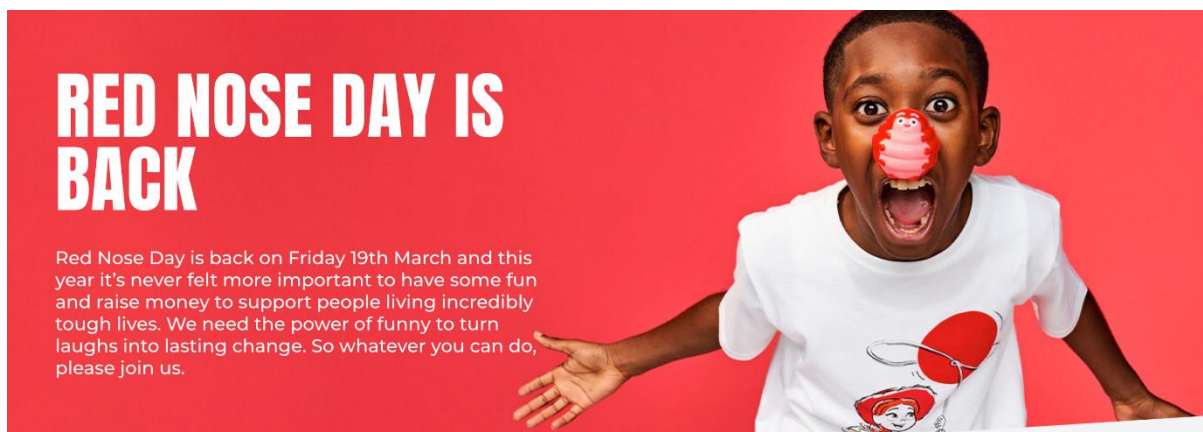
To keep larger groups to a minimum on the morning drop offs; please keep your child in the car until a member of staff advises they can go in, as this, we hope, will reduce pupil bubbles mixing before the start of school. The school gates will open at 8:50 so do not arrive early, as we know children do not like to wait. Secondary aged pupils will come in via the Tenterden Way entrance but will go out via St Anthony's Way, unless they are on school transport. Parents who walk with their child, can I ask you to please wear a face covering when waiting at the end of the day and maintain social distancing from other parents.

I have updated the school risk assessment, version 5, for re-opening and this contains all the plans we have in place to keep pupils and staff safe. This can be found on the school website; it is well worth a read. If you have any worries or concerns please do contact a member of school staff and we will try to address them, as we wish to ensure you feel safe.

As I said to the staff this week the number of COVID cases are coming down, which is positive but now is not the time to relax our guard; we all must remain vigilant to ensure that COVID does not make a major reappearance. So PLEASE do follow the current government guidance regarding lockdown.



Pupils and Staff celebrated World Book Day 2021 on Thursday. It was a wonderful relief from the joys of COVID to see pupils and staff dressed as a character from a book. Staff and pupils from Blyton and Potter classes, dressed up, not once but twice, as they had whole class costumes as well. Thank you to Katy Wren for organising.



We are celebrating Red Nose Day on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> March. We will be selling Red Noses in school starting next week for £1. If you would like to purchase one, please send £1 in with your child. On the day, it will be non-uniform for a donation of £1.

### **Asymptomatic testing information for parents and adults in households with children at school or college**

NHS Test and Trace announced earlier this week that all adults in households with school age children without symptoms can now access regular rapid coronavirus (COVID-19) testing.

Test kits can either be collected or ordered online, as set out below. Secondary school students will continue to access testing through their school or college.

Undertaking regular rapid coronavirus (COVID-19) testing helps reduce transmission of the virus. Parents and other adults in households with children at school or college, who do not have symptoms, can now access regular, rapid coronavirus (COVID-19) tests.

Tests are fast, easy and completely free. There are [different ways](#) for a household, childcare or support bubble to collect their test to take at home, twice-weekly:

- through your employer, if they offer testing to employees
- by collecting a home test kit from a local test site – anyone aged 18 or over can collect 2 packs of 7 tests
- by ordering a home test kit online – please do not order online if you can access testing through other routes, this frees up home delivery for those who need it most

If you have any queries about the tests please call 119 (free from mobiles and landlines). Lines are open every day from 7am to 11pm.

Children of primary school age (and below) without symptoms are not being asked to take a test.

Testing is voluntary, but strongly recommended to all who are eligible. Alongside the vaccine, washing hands, wearing face coverings, and maintaining social distancing, rapid testing plays a vital role in reducing transmission rates. Getting into the habit of regular testing as part of our everyday lives will help us all to play our part and do what we can to protect each other.



Ahead of pupils returning to school over the next couple of weeks, Kent Police have asked me to remind children of the current Covid guidelines when they are travelling to and from their homes. Parents please encourage them to make their way straight to school and to NOT meet beforehand with friends in public.

At the end of the school day, the warmer weather will also undoubtedly entice children into parks and other public areas; however it is again important to remember that the current rules only allow meeting one person from another household at a safe distance outdoors, and only as part of daily exercise.

During the next few weeks, officers will be out in several locations for reassurance purposes and to ensure the safety of children and other people.

They also highlighted some of the other ways that children can off-load their concerns:

Childline.org.uk  
Fearless.org  
Kooth.com  
nationaldahelpline.org.uk

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'R Page'.

Headteacher



