*Welcome back.*

We hope that you had a safe half term. We are all set for a half term of successful learning and are looking forward to more signs of spring.

**New Covid legislation**

During half term break the Covid rules were changed

The key points to note are:

Pupils and staff identified as close contacts are NOT advised to isolate or take daily LFTs.

Only those that show symptoms should test, or are advised to test to support outbreak management.

In addition, the following advice is relevant:

As with any other illness children who are unwell should not attend school whilst they are unwell.

If any illness develops into a cough, change in temperature, changes to taste and smell, the advice remains to isolate and test for Covid.

If the test is negative the pupil should return to school.

If the test is positive, follow advise to isolate.

The full guidance can be found by following the attached link.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-people-with-covid-19-and-their-contacts/covid-19-people-with-covid-19-and-their-contacts>

**How will this change actions in school?**

Last half term we had the highest number of children absent due to Covid. At the height 10 children in Eagle Class were absent. The majority of these children had headaches/ temperature over a couple of days but were required to be out of school for 10 days. We had smaller numbers across the rest of the school. Younger children were predominantly without symptoms and were tested because older siblings had positive tests. So we expect that for many parents being able to decide if your child is out of school based on their health will be good news.

We will continue to keep break and lunchtimes as they are whilst the weather keeps us off the field. Once we are on the field we will return to whole school break times.

We will begin to have whole school celebration assemblies on Fridays and begin to help younger children to adjust to this experience. We will look forward to inviting parents within a few weeks. On Friday 18th March, Red Nose Day, will be a non-uniform day, whole school celebration.

We will be able to make plans that we will then be more certain that we can stick to. We will be able to make plans that allow children from across the school to work with each other.

We are very grateful for your continued support and sincerely look forward to returning back to fully normal.

**PTFA Events**

We would really like to resurrect our community events organised by the PTFA. If you have any capacity to support PTFA events please contact the office. This is a very important aspect of our school life that we have missed so much. Restoring it would be wonderful. Whatever time you can offer will be appreciated.

**Dates for the diary reminders**

Wednesday 2nd March - Eagle and Kestrel Class attending church for Ash Wednesday Service

Thursday 3rd March World Book Day; bring your favourite book to school

Friday 4th March Dress up for World Book Day

Monday 7th March Storytelling workshops with local story teller Katy Cawkwell will work with each class through the day. Katy has worked with us before and weaves magical stories with and for the children.

Bikeability for Year 5&6 begins on Monday 7th March. A timetable will be shared. **Bikes can be kept in school for the week**.

Waffle Talk Workshops; Year 6 Group 1 Wednesday 9th March. Year 6 Group 2 Wednesday 16th March.

Wed 23rd March Year 5 and Year 6 trip to London Houses of Parliament debate workshops, London Eye and River Cruise.

Last week of term parent consultation sessions. These will likely be in school events. Details to be confirmed.

Wishing you a peaceful start to the Lenten Season from all at St Mary’s