

## St Andrew's Major Church in Wales Primary School

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Dear Parents/Carers,

11<sup>th</sup> December 2020

### End of Term

#### ***End of Term Arrangements (Message from the Vale of Glamorgan Council)***

*We are writing to you following Welsh Government's announcement late yesterday about secondary schools moving to distance learning from Monday 13 December until the end of term. This decision was taken in response to advice received yesterday from the Chief Medical Officer.*

*Having initially planned for both primary and secondary schools across the Vale of Glamorgan to remain open until 18<sup>th</sup> December, the Council has kept its decision under review in order to respond to the evolving situation should the need arise. Over the past week, there has been a significant and rapid rise in the number of year groups needing to isolate due to contact with positive cases in schools, reflecting the increase in positive cases we are seeing across Wales. Consequently, staffing levels have also been adversely affected due to contact group isolations, positive cases, and childcare requirements, creating a challenging situation for some schools. The safety of our staff, pupils and communities continues to be our priority.*

*The increasing challenges of the current situation means that the viability of schools remaining open in the coming week is questionable. Following lengthy discussion and consideration of a wide range of factors, the Council has advised its primary schools, nursery schools and special school to move to distance learning on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> December.*

*Ideally, we would have liked to be in a position to provide more notice of this decision, however, the speed with which circumstances have changed across Wales and in the Vale of Glamorgan has prevented this. We appreciate your understanding of the situation and are grateful for the support you are affording your local school as we continue to manage the situation together.*

*Thank you for your understanding, patience and resolve as we continue to work towards a brighter 2021.*

As you will see from the above message, the last day of face to face school for pupils will be Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> December.

We moved Christmas lunch, parties and the filming of our Christmas concert to this week as a precaution. The children can watch the virtual panto in school next week but we are also able to send the link to families in order for you to watch it at home. After such a tough year, we have been determined to give the children a fun end to term!

I have started to get indications that some of you are choosing to keep your children home in the last week of term anyway in order to limit any chance of having to self-isolate. It would help us in terms of planning if you would inform us if you are intending to keep your child home next week. This will also enable staff to plan work on See-saw for those staying at home. Staff will continue to work in order to provide distance learning on 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> for all pupils and they will ensure Bug Club accounts are updated. Activities will be similar to those usually done in class at the end of the autumn term and will no doubt have a Christmas theme to them. Although optional, we would love to see all children taking part. The reason Local Authorities and schools are taking these measures is to try and help bring down community transmission so I ask you to be mindful of this and not arrange play dates and visits out etc. Take the opportunity to protect you, your loved ones and others by following the advice of the medical advisors.

Please email the school office [standrewsmajorps@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:standrewsmajorps@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk) if you **do not** intend for your child to attend next week. Thank you to those who already have done so. Under these exceptional circumstances, governors have agreed that we will authorise any absences for the last 3 days (Mon 14<sup>th</sup> to Weds 16<sup>th</sup>) but please do inform us beforehand. Please note that this is an exception to our usual expectations of high attendance which we will return to once the risks have gone.

A positive case in any contact group next week would no doubt result in that group (all pupils and staff) being instructed by Track and Trace to self-isolate for 10 days (changed from 14 days as of Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> Dec) – this would include part of the Christmas period.

Therefore, can I please urge you to be vigilant in the coming days and to not send your child to school if they or anyone in your household are showing any signs of illness as this could jeopardise the safety (and the Christmas) of the entire contact group. I am very grateful to those families who have done this in recent weeks. Also do remember that we can request a Covid test for any pupil who has signs of covid symptoms.

I will write again next week with any updates and guidance on what to do if you have concerns over the holidays.

In the meantime please continue to follow all the school's requests and keep everyone safe. Let's hope everyone can have a lovely Christmas – everyone certainly deserves it!

Yours faithfully,



Gen Hallett  
Headteacher