



*We are called to be the hands and face of Jesus as we learn, love and grow together*

**Headteacher: Mr J White BEd (Hons) NPQH**

**St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Primary School**

Bedwell Crescent, Stevenage, Herts., SG1 1NJ

Tel: 01438 729555

Email: [admin@stvincent.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@stvincent.herts.sch.uk)

[www.stvincent.herts.sch.uk](http://www.stvincent.herts.sch.uk)

21<sup>st</sup> January 2022

Dear Parents and carers

Despite all of the challenges it has been a wonderful return to school for the children who are very settled in their approach to new learning this term already.

### Keeping up with the curriculum

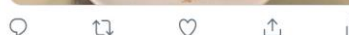
I do hope that you are able to follow all that your children are up to via our Twitter feed (@svdp\_school) which can be accessed via the front page of our website even if you do not have a Twitter account yourself. ([www.stvincent.herts.sch.uk](http://www.stvincent.herts.sch.uk)). This is a great opportunity to see how we are approaching elements of the curriculum across the school.



stvincentdepaul @svdp\_school · 2d ...  
Year 2 have been learning about how the Disciples became "fishers of men" with Jesus.



stvincentdepaul @svdp\_school · 41m ...  
Some fabulous home learning in year 3. B managed to create Stonehenge using weetabix & homemade cookies. Well done. It's great to see that our home learners are joining in too.  
[#svdepHIST](#) [#stonehenge](#) [#homelearning](#)



stvincentdepaul @svdp\_school · 3h ...  
Year 5 have become completely absorbed in turning a narrative into a mystery and suspense play script. 👍



You can also catch up on what we have been up to through our weekly Pupil Post document which is ParentMailed to all families at the end of the week. Our sincere thanks go out to Mrs Sherry who, despite her retirement, is still pulling this document together for us each week!

### Managing the current covid situation

Despite the much-publicised easing of restrictions nationally, schools locally (particularly primaries) are still very much feeling the impact of Covid.

In school this week, rising cases has been our trend and as of today there are **32 live cases** that we have been notified of (that's 7.2% of the school population). A number of other children are engaging in **daily lateral flow testing** due to contact with a positive case, with some of these individuals isolating with a sibling (this is really helping to slow down transmission). I have been in contact with Public Health colleagues on the Covid Response Team at Hertfordshire County Council throughout this week and they have declared that we are in an outbreak situation, with a particular



cluster of cases in Year 4, Year 2 and Year 1 and with isolated cases in every other year group. We are following the advice of Public Health officials who have agreed with the implementation of our contingency plan and some additional measures that we have suggested.

**They have advised that we are correct to ask pupils and staff in Years 1, 2 and 4, as well as those using our after school and breakfast club facilities to engage in daily lateral flow testing for the time being. They have also advised that it is wise for our staff to continue wearing their masks in communal areas and in classrooms until the number of cases begin to reduce.**

In addition, I would urge parents visiting the site (at drop off and collection) to **continue to wear masks (unless exempt)** as with all visitors in the building for the time being.

I have been asked to remind families of the importance of **vaccination** of individuals over the age of 12 and of **vigilance for official symptoms**:

- High temperature
- Persistent / changed cough
- Change to sense of taste or smell

If you or a child has any of these symptoms, you should still book a PCR test and isolate whilst waiting for results.

Asymptomatic individuals from 5+ years can be tested using a Lateral Flow Device (available freely from pharmacies, Stevenage Central Library and online). If you are asymptomatic and you receive a positive LFT result you must isolate immediately, and you do not need to take a PCR test. A positive LFT result must be registered on the government website as well as notified to the school.

You can leave your isolation after testing negative on both day 5 and day 6 of your isolation or in relation to two tests thereafter. These tests must be 24hrs apart.

**In addition, many children are finding that they develop non-official symptoms such as sickness, an upset stomach or general lethargy before testing positive.**

**Today 35 children (7.5% of the school population) were absent from school with an upset tummy or sickness.** This could be a nasty sickness bug doing the rounds or it could be an early sign of covid for some. Either way we need to be careful. Therefore, there are two measures that Public Health officials have agreed that our families should take at this time:

- (1) Children should not return to school until **48hrs** (not the usual 24hrs) after their last bout of sickness; and
- (2) If your child has been sick or has an upset stomach, you should engage in **daily LFT testing** with them for 7 days once the sickness has passed.

Although we have sustained increased measures in our cleaning schedule, Mrs Lorimer has arranged for the school to have an extra deep clean over the weekend in order that we can do everything possible to curb the spread of both covid and sickness. Children will also be reminded of the importance of good hand hygiene routines.

### **Job opportunity**

If you are currently thinking about returning to part time work and are available between 11.30 and 1.30 each day, you may be suited to work as a general assistant with Herts Catering in our school kitchen? If you are interested, please email [admin@stvincent.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@stvincent.herts.sch.uk) and Mrs Levey will pass your details on. Please note that safeguarding is our number one priority and all employees in a school setting will be subject to relevant safeguarding checks.



## For a Synodal Church: Communion, participation & Mission

This week a number of our children were involved in feeding back via school staff to the Cardinal, who in turn is due to feed back to the Pope as part of the worldwide Synod of Bishops. The Synod is a great listening event where the Church aims to hear from all of us so that it can open its doors more widely to all and reach out to more. Our children were very proud to be a part of this process and spoke beautifully about the need to be even more welcoming to all; about the need for social times and the chance to build up relationships with people of the same faith; about their desire to be fully involved and to be able to sing modern songs; and about their desire to be open to learning about people of all faiths and to share their faith with people of other faiths. Our Church has a great future in the hands of the young!



Please join us in praying that the Synod brings great strength and a renewed mission to our Church:

*Teach me to listen, O God, to myself.*

Help me to be less afraid to trust the voice inside –  
in the deepest part of me.

Teach me to listen, Holy Spirit, for your voice –  
in busyness and in boredom,  
in certainty and doubt,  
in noise and in silence.

Teach me, Lord, to listen.

*Teach me to listen, O God, to those nearest me,*

my family, my friends, my co-workers.  
Help me to be aware that no matter what words I hear,  
the message is:

“Accept the person I am. Listen to me”.

*Teach me to listen, my caring God, to those far from me –*

the whisper of the hopeless,  
the plea of the forgotten,  
the cry of the anguished.

Amen.

*(Fr John Veltri SJ)*

May God bless you and those most dear to you.

Jon White  
Headteacher





**Dates for your diary:**

Fri 11 <sup>th</sup> February 2022	School closes for half term break
Mon 21 <sup>st</sup> February 2022	INSET day (no pupils)
Tues 22 <sup>nd</sup> February 2022	Pupils return to school
Fri 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2022 2pm	School closes for Easter break
Mon 18 <sup>th</sup> April 2022	Bank holiday (no school)
Tues 19 <sup>th</sup> April 2022	Pupils return to school

