



Archdiocese of Birmingham

# St Ambrose Barlow Newsletter

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## Back to School Blessing.

We have had time to rest, and now we are full of energy.  
We have had time to think, and now we are full of ideas.  
We have had time to stop, and now it's time to get going.  
Be with us Lord we pray. Amen

## Welcome Back

It is absolutely fantastic to welcome you all back into school! We have missed you all so much over the last months and we are delighted to be getting our school back to as near normal as we are allowed to, in these strange times. A huge well done to everyone for coming back into school so calmly, sensibly and with such joy! We are so proud of how the children have returned and thrilled at how pleased they all are to be back with their friends and teachers.

We warmly welcome our new families; we would like to welcome you to our school community. We are happy that you chose a Catholic education for your child and we hope that you always feel at home at St. Ambrose Barlow. Open communication is the key to building strong, positive relationships. Please contact the school office if you have questions or concerns.

Thankfully, all have settled into the new norm and their new classes. Children have approached their first week with their customary enthusiasm, many expressing that they were very happy to be back. Children are working beautifully in their class bubbles and are playing outside in their class zones. Children are washing and sanitising their hands regularly and keeping a social distance when they need to. Could I ask that all children in Key Stage 2 bring in their own bottle of sanitiser to keep in their desk, as this will greatly support procedures put in place in school.

As you are aware, I needed to rapidly change the arrangements for the pick-up and drop off positions and times. The new systems are working much more effectively. Your support is much appreciated in helping to keep everyone safe. As a reminder please see the details below.

Staggered drop-off and collection times.

Year Group	Start	Finish
Reception	9.00	3.00
Year 1	8.45	3.20
Year 2	8.45	3.10
Year 3	8.55	3.30
Year 4	8.55	3.20
Year 5	8.40	3.15
Year 6	8.30	3.25

You are all now familiar with your collection points. We are continuing to tweak procedures, to keep everyone as safe as possible. Could I ask that if you are collecting from the Year 5 point (the Caretaker's House), that you stand to the side by the garden fences (to the left as you look at the Caretaker's House). Your child will walk to the school fence to meet you, so they do not have to walk through a group of parents. As you wait for your child, please keep a social distance from other parents.

If you are collecting from the Year 2 and Year 6 point, please keep to the side (alongside the Caretaker's front garden). Your child will walk alongside the opposite side by the cars to meet you, so they are again are not walking through groups of parents. As you wait for your child, please keep a social distance from other parents.

Year 4 parents - please stand alongside the wall, so that you are not obstructing other parents leaving from the playground. Please move to the left to greet your child and follow the white arrows down the drive. As you wait for your child, please keep a social distance from other parents.

If you are collecting children from the front playground (classes – Reception, Year 1 and Year 3), please use the dots to social distance from other parents.

Finally, could I remind parents not to stand chatting outside the school gate and to disperse quickly. We want to keep not only children and staff in school safe but also parents, grandparents, other vulnerable children and adults that are in our family bubbles.

If parents have younger children returning home with them or children with them when collecting, they must hold the children's hands at all times. This is to ensure social distancing at all times within the school site.

Please ensure that the adult dropping off and collecting your child/ren from school is from the same household or extended bubble as the child. When your children are entering and exiting the site they must be at your side at all times. They must not run ahead, as they risk mixing with children from other bubbles. It is vital that we have your full support, to comply with social distancing on and around the school site. We want to keep our whole community safe and ensure that our children's education can continue safely at school. We cannot become complacent; we remain in a very unstable environment and we must work together to keep each other safe.

### **Covid 19**

If anyone in a child's household has a cough/temperature/feels unwell they must not come to school. Please continue to check the Government Guidance for advice.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/coronavirus-in-children/>

#### **NHS Guidance states: Symptoms of coronavirus in children**

The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot, for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours
- a loss or change to sense of smell or taste – this means they cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

If anyone has a cough/temperature/feels unwell at school, they must be collected straight away.

Government Guidance: *Parents/carers must understand that they will need to be ready and willing to:*

- *book a test if they are displaying symptoms. Pupils must not come into the school if they have symptoms, and must be sent home to self-isolate if they develop them in school*
- *provide details of anyone they have been in close contact with if they were to test positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) or if asked by NHS Test & Trace*
- *self-isolate if they have been in close contact with someone who develops coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms or someone who tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19).*

If someone tests positive, they should follow the 'stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection'

### **Water**

Could I remind parents to provide their child with a clear plastic water bottle, marked with their child's name and class. Pupils will be able to refill their bottles in school, throughout the day. There are lots of children whose bottles are still not labelled with their name. Please ensure they have a bottle every day and that bottles only contain water - squash or fizzy water is not allowed. At break time children are no longer permitted to bring in cartons to school, they are only allowed their water bottle.

### **The 'New Normal'**

Over the next few weeks, we will be continuing to set up our 'new normal' and making sure the children feel safe and happy and know what the new routines are. The staff at St Ambrose Barlow are very mindful that some of the pupils may have felt anxious or a little worried about coming back to school and I would like to reassure you, that we are giving our pupils the time to talk and supporting them, so that they feel happy and safe in school.

I know you will continue to work with us, so your children can grow in confidence, with a love of learning, and a determination to be the best person they can be. As parents and carers you put a great value on school and education. You demonstrate this daily by ensuring your child is on time and in school every day, wearing the correct uniform, while also encouraging them to work hard in school. These are all important life skills. The value you place on these will be the values your child holds.

### **Homework Routines and Policy**

We are all busy people and the new norm has brought extra strains on our daily lives. I know you are all putting new routines in place. Please continue to put a routine in place whereby children know they must do their homework, reading etc. During this time turn the television or computer off. Use the television/computer as incentives for work done – they will value it more. Your children are your most important gift from God, treasure them, help them, guide them and support them. I know we will all start this new term with this commitment. We will continue to monitor the homework books/reading records etc.

**The Homework Policy** is available to view on the school website at [www.sab.bham.sch.uk](http://www.sab.bham.sch.uk). The policy outlines the importance that we place on out of school learning activities and the partnership between home and school in the education of our children. Teachers will inform you how homework will work for each class.

### **Reminders - We need your support with:**

#### **PE Kit**

All children need to have their FULL PE KIT in school. PE kits (shorts, tops and pumps), are brought in on a Monday and left in school for the week. Your child must take part in every PE lesson except in exceptional circumstances, with school permission (with a doctor's or hospital note).

#### **Swimming for Year 3**

We are waiting to hear when swimming sessions will resume, we will of course keep you updated.

#### **Marking of clothes**

All items of clothing (including school ties) should be clearly marked with your child's name. This will help to prevent parents having to replace lost garments - we are all aware of the considerable cost of clothing our children. There will be a uniform check on Friday 18<sup>th</sup>, to ensure all clothing is labelled. This will ensure it is easier to trace 'misplaced' or 'lost' property (of which there can be a large amount in Lost Property with no names on).

#### **Contact Numbers**

It is very important that we have the correct contact number for you and at least one other person named by you (we must have at least two contact names and numbers) on record in the office, so that we can reach you in case your child is unwell during the day. Please ensure at least one of the contact phones can be answered at all times, in the event that your child needs to be collected promptly.

The other people you have named need to know of your arrangements, in case they are contacted to collect your child if we cannot contact you. Please email any amendments to these arrangements to the school office and they will adjust your information on our system.

#### **Healthy School Lunchboxes**

Schools are powerful places to shape the health, education and well-being of our children. We would remind parents that sweets and chocolate are not allowed as part of a pupil's packed lunch. Pupils are encouraged to bring healthy, tasty foods such as whole grain bread, fresh fruit, vegetables and lean meats. Healthy students are better able to concentrate on their work, attend school on a regular basis and perform better in class.

Eating well and taking regular exercise are the best steps anyone can take to leading a healthy life and preventing ill health. We appreciate your support in keeping St. Ambrose Barlow a 'Healthy Eating School'. Could I ask all lunch boxes to be labelled with your child's name. On the first day back we had unlabelled boxes left behind!

#### **Medicines in School**

All parents were asked to collect medication at the end of last term. There were a few that were left in school. These have been sent home when they have been located. May I remind you that the school can only administer prescribed medicines. Please put your child's prescribed medicine on the table in the front playground, clearly marked with their name, class and dosage. You will also need to fill in a Record of Administration of Medicines form, which you must request by emailing the school office.

Guidelines on the administering of medicines in schools issued by Birmingham Local Authority state that, "It should be the exception rather than the rule for medicines to be brought into school". (This does not of course include asthma inhalers, medicines required by pupils with potentially life-threatening medical conditions or chronic illnesses). Please ensure that you check expiry dates etc. Epipens must be updated.

The guidance goes on to say that it is normally expected that parents administer medicines to their children. It suggests that parents be advised that GPs are requested to prescribe medicines in a way which avoids the need for them to be brought onto the school premises. Many thanks for your cooperation.

### **Reading Reminder - 5 times a week**

It is well proven that children who read regularly, read well and we know that reading is vital to learning. We have a policy that your child should be reading 5 times a week at home, and that a parent must sign the reading log to say that they have read.

This reading log comes to school each day and is checked for a signature. If a child has not read 5 times in that week, then they will have to stay in at break time to read for 10 minutes (and then go outside for 5 minutes play). This will continue to happen and children will be asked to sit in the quiet zone to read during playtime, if they have not read at home.

Surprisingly, this rule tends to stop arguments in the evening about reading, as the children know they will be checked up on in school! A week runs from Friday to Thursday, so it's important a child reads at least once over the weekend (reading Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday night will only be 4 times).

It would also be great if you spent some time reading to your child. Reading books aloud to children, stimulates their imagination and expands their understanding of the world. It helps them develop language and listening skills and prepares them to understand the written word. Even after children learn to read by themselves, it's still important for you to read aloud together and discuss the texts.

We, in school will do everything we can to help your child to do their best. Let us know if we can support you in any way. Remember we operate an open-door policy – although parents cannot have the daily contact with their teachers in the morning, please email or phone the school office if you have concerns or need support, help or advice. Thank you for your assistance.

### **Laudato Si' – Care for our Common Home.**

Our children will continue to strive to live out Laudato Si', the appeal from Pope Francis addressed to "every person living on this planet" for an inclusive dialogue.

This year children will continue to learn about the message given by Pope Francis. In Laudato Si', Pope Francis has reminded us that God created the world as a common home for us all, now and for the future. He has called us to consider our use of this world and how we choose to live in it. How can we care for our common home?

We will be discussing how the world is being spoiled by greed, disharmony, exploitation of natural resources etc, and how we can make the world a better place. We are always actively striving to make the world a better place, but we can always do more, with the target to do even just one thing a day. We will be looking at how our friends are also living Laudato Si. We will be learning that YES, we CAN care for our common home.

Children will need your support to live Laudato Si. In light of this can we ask you to send one water bottle throughout the year which can be re-filled. We must consider our use of plastic. As Pope Francis put it in Laudato Si': 'to live wisely, think deeply, and ... to move away from single use plastics to more durable alternatives.'

## School Meals

**KS1** - All KS1 pupils are entitled to universal free school meals.

**KS2** - Payment for KS2 meals must be paid in advance through the 'School Money' website. The cost of school dinners is £2.40 per day, £12.00 per week (which includes Pizza Friday). Payments for Pizza Friday (£2.40) are payable in the same way. Dinners can be paid weekly or half-termly and we do ask that meal arrangements be maintained for the duration of that half-term. If there are any changes to these arrangements for the following half-term, please contact the school office.

We ask parents to stay in credit whenever possible. This is particularly important, as:

- After two days of non-payment, a reminder message will be sent out
- After five days of non-payment, school dinners will cease to be provided and a healthy packed lunch will be required from home until arrears are cleared.

## Friday Fasting and Abstinence

In accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church, the school will abstain from meat on Fridays. If your child currently brings a packed lunch into school, please ensure this does not contain meat on Friday.

## Dress: School Uniform

Boys	Girls
White school shirt	White school shirt
School tie	School tie
Grey 'v' neck school pullover	Grey 'v' neck school cardigan/pullover
Grey school trousers (short or long)	Grey school skirt/pinafore dress or grey school trousers
Plain grey socks	Plain grey, black or white socks,
Shoes*	plain grey, or black tights
Coats should be in school colours	Shoes*

Thank you for supporting our uniform policy including sensible black shoes. Children should now be in their winter uniform.

## Earrings, Jewellery, Hair.

Please do not allow your child to wear jewellery to school. Only small stud earrings are allowed. No extremes of hairstyles are permitted e.g. no child to have less than a 'No. 2' cut; no lines or patterns, no extreme spiking or gelling; no artificial colouring. Long hair should be tied back and secured with a hair attachment appropriate to school colours. Children must not wear nail varnish to school.

Hairstyles that completely ignore school policy; will not be tolerated and sanctions will be imposed. As parents and carers, it is your responsibility to ensure that your child adheres to school policy.

## Parking/Road Safety

I have been informed that parking is again becoming an issue outside school. Where possible please walk to school. If this is not possible please do not park directly outside the school as this causes congestion. This is obviously important at the present time. Moving promptly from the outside of the school site will contribute to keeping everyone safe.

Please can I ask that we respect and obey the traffic laws, particularly on the roads closest to the school. This includes avoiding the corner of Boyleston Road and Temple Avenue and not parking opposite, or in front of driveways. Thank you to all those parents who already co-operate in this matter by parking with consideration for others.

**In all cases please ensure that you obey the following, which forms rule 243 of the Highway Code:-**

DO NOT stop or park:-

- Near the school entrance.
- Anywhere you would prevent access for emergency services.
- Opposite or within 10 metres (32 feet) of a junction except in an authorised parking space.
- Opposite a traffic island or (if this would cause an obstruction) another parked vehicle.
- Where a kerb has been lowered to help wheelchair users and powered mobility vehicles.
- In front of an entrance to a property.
- On a bend.
- On the pavement.
- Where you would obstruct cyclists' use of cycle facilities except when forced to do so by stationary traffic.

**Online Safety Gaming** - please continue to monitor your child online. Children should not be accessing inappropriate games on the internet while at home. There are clear guidelines as to what are age appropriate games. If you require further support regarding this, you will find a wealth of information at [/www.internetmatters.org/advice/online-gaming](http://www.internetmatters.org/advice/online-gaming).

**Social Media** - the minimum age for using most social media is 12 or 13. We are aware however that some children do access these sites out of school. We would urge all users of social media to act in a responsible manner. The NSPCC have produced guidelines to assist parents in keeping children safe. You can access their link at NSPCC Keeping Children Safe.

### **Absence, including holidays**

School attendance is once again mandatory and the usual rules on attendance apply. Please see above for information about Covid Symptoms. Please ensure that you inform the school on the first day of your child's absence. In the interests of the safety of pupils, it is a requirement that schools ascertain a child's whereabouts if he/she is absent from school.

Can I remind you that it is important that if your child is well, they are present at school every day and on time. Government guidelines state that schools cannot authorise absence for holidays. Therefore, holidays and other absences will not be authorised. Thank you to the great majority of our parents who already ensure that their children are present at school except in exceptional circumstances.

### **Recycling Awareness**

Each class has a battery recycling point and we would welcome any used batteries from home so that we can become a greener school. More information can be found at <http://www.batteryback.org/>. Used pens, cartridges, felt tips, highlighters and whiteboard pens are also collected in each classroom. Each pen raises money for our school. More information can be found at <http://www.terracycle.co.uk/en-UK/>. We must ensure that these items are recycled and don't end up in a landfill sites.

### **2020-2021 4+ Admissions**

If you have a child who will be four years old between 1st September 2020 and 31st August 2021 and who has not yet been registered for admission, then please inform the school as soon as possible.

### **Website**

The website is regularly updated with activities that are going on in school.

### **School Money App**

To help you receive up to date information please download the School Money App

Yours sincerely

Mrs M. Winters  
Headteacher