



Our Lady's Catholic High School



A National Teaching School

Friday, 16 October 2020

The theme for next week is **THE AUTHORITY OF GOD (MATTHEW 22: 15 – 21)**

Give back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar...

The Pharisees want to catch Jesus out. So when they ask him about paying tax to Caesar, Jesus replies, "Give back to Caesar what is Caesar's – and to God what belongs to God". Jesus is not trying to avoid the question. The point is everything belongs to God. Caesar has a responsibility given to him by God to look after his people, he is God's servant. The people should respect Caesar's demands but ultimately put God first. Nothing has changed. We should respect those in authority, but only in so much as their authority rightly demands. No more, no less. God must come first.

**Lord God,
May I love You in all things and above all things.
May I find joy in serving You each day.
May I always live with a servant heart in all that I do.
Amen**

A MESSAGE FROM MR RANSON - PE KIT AND LOCKERS

I have been asked by a parent whether it would be possible for pupils to wear their PE kit to school all day on the day where they have their PE lesson. I should like to share with you my response in the hope that it may help families to understand the situation better as, at first sight, this is a sensible suggestion.

As you can imagine, this is a matter of pros and cons. When considering mainly the problems associated with no locker and carrying the PE kit, the argument for wearing a PE kit to school for the day become quite compelling. The kit has our school badge, fewer bags to carry, removes changing room proximity. In addition, there would be time saving and therefore more curriculum time. There are however some strong counter arguments and the decision comes from balancing the two:

- Pupils sometimes get caught in a shower during outside lessons; this would mean that all pupils are in wet clothes all day unless they had a spare set at all times and there is still a need to change
- Sports on grass would need to be avoided in wet conditions to reduce the chance of pupils ruining their PE uniform for the day
- This could possibly further reduce our curriculum. An example is orienteering; an outdoor individual sport which is planning to be used after half-term. It is an ideal sport for the current situation. Yet pupils get very muddy and wet and would have to get changed either way
- As a consequence of avoiding being wet/muddy, lesson activities would be more suited to inside sports where guidance indicates to be outside where possible
- Girls have PE hoodies as part of their PE kit; this conflicts with the uniform policy if they were to be allowed to wear them around school. If not allowed to wear hoodies, a solution would be needed as they will be cold
- GCSE pupils still need to take part in sports such as football (under conditions) which needs to be filmed for their examination. Therefore, they will get wet/muddy, they will need to get changed
- We want to run extra-curricular clubs this year in bubbles; do they need to come in their kit as well?
- Pupils who do not come in their kit would need to get changed into spare kit; our teachers must supervise in the changing room for those pupils, while also having to look after those already changed
- The PE kit does not display the year group colour which is a vital tool in quickly assessing in which year group, and therefore which bubble a pupil belongs

Reference to 'other schools' is often made by people but they are not conclusive: each school is unique. Some schools have outdoor lockers for everyone so potentially they could easily have pupils still using lockers. Our lockers are spread throughout the school and are not placed in form rooms – with a few exceptions. It is the journey to

lockers that is the problem along with the congregating and cleaning requirements once used and the need for our one-way system. Access to lockers would cause serious time delays and require consistent additional supervision. The solution: each child carries their belongings. It is also the case that several schools where 'PE kit worn for the PE lesson day' was initiated in September have now stopped doing this, having encountered the very problems that are listed above. Some schools have fields with excellent drainage or have one of the large artificial surface games areas – frustratingly, we do not.

In light of all of these considerations, it remains our belief that the overall best strategy is to continue with pupils carrying their PE kit separately on the day of their PE class and maintain normal uniform each day. Along with so many others, I just long for a return to normality; every one of us is carrying additional burdens at present: some physical, some psychological, some emotional. This is one of the physical burdens that has fallen on our children, but we hope and pray that it will be temporary.

With thanks for your ongoing understanding and support.

TERM DATES 2021-2022

The term dates for 2021-2022 have been approved by the Governing Body and are attached with this Newsletter. Term dates for the current school year are available on the website.

RECOGNISING COVID SYMPTOMS

An important information document containing guidance on recognising COVID symptoms is attached with this Newsletter. Parents and carers may find this information a useful reference tool.

MILL LANE PARK

After school we have a number of pupils who enjoy using play equipment on the park, situated adjacent to Cadley Causeway (the infant play equipment next to the pavilion is of course strictly out of bounds). It is very important that the children using this equipment remember that they must not mix between year groups. If your child uses the play equipment on the park, I should be grateful if you would speak about this and confirm your expectation that they must not mix with children of other year groups. The simplest parental expectation is that your child leaves the park and goes home should it not be possible to remain separate from other year groups.

YEAR 11 PARENTS EVENING

Due to COVID 19 restrictions we will be trailing a virtual Parents' Evening for our Year 11 pupils next week. This will be in the form of video conferencing via the Schoolcoms system. Details will be sent out shortly to Year 11 parents and if the system proves successful, we will plan to use this format for other year groups.

REWARDS ASSEMBLIES

Next week year group Rewards Assemblies will take place. These assemblies celebrate the commitment to school life of all our pupils.

FORGOTTEN ITEMS

We regret that parents/carers are not able to bring in forgotten items such as PE kits, homework, books or any other equipment due to the risk of contamination. The protection of our pupils and staff is paramount and anything brought in would have to sit for 48 hours before being touched. We ask for your understanding and support at this time.

Dates to remember

Friday, 23 October – School closes for half-term
Monday, 2 November – School opens
Friday, 18 December – School closes for Christmas at 12.45 pm
Monday, 4 January – School opens for the Spring Term
Friday, 12 February 2021 – School closes for half-term
Monday, 22 February INSET day school closed for all pupils
Tuesday, 23 February – school opens