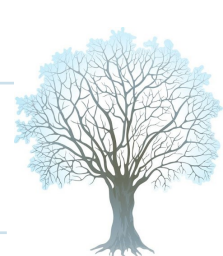


# St. Thomas' S.N.S. Newsletter



22nd November, 2021

## Rule of the Week

I have respect for people and property.

## COVID

As cases increase in the country, schools are finding themselves under considerable stress. Throughout the country schools are suffering from a staffing crisis as they try to source cover for teachers who are sick or isolating. This has resulted in some disruption for children. St Thomas' SNS unfortunately is no different.

Given the current daily case numbers and the introduction of the five day rule for household contacts, the likelihood is that there will be more pupils and teachers forced to stay or be sent home. New guidelines have been introduced around antigen testing and these will come into effect on the 29th November. Please see the attached "Q&A around antigen testing in schools" for clarity on this.. The school will continue to operate under the excellent procedures in place to ensure that everyone is as safe as possible. We greatly appreciate your support and cooperation with regards to this.

## Congratulations

Julie McKenna is our new school HSCL. Her experience and knowledge of the school, the people and the area will ensure that the excellent work done by previous HSCL will continue. You can contact Julie by calling the office on 01 4526555

## Attendance Drive

Please continue to support the November attendance drive. We are nearly there and it has been fantastic to see the enthusiasm and effort the pupils are putting in. I'd also like to thank you all for the amazing work you do in getting your children to school. If your child happens to be absent please send in a note or phone the office or email the class teacher. Your support is crucial this month and if the school can help in any way please don't hesitate to contact us.

## Online Safety

All pupils will be provided with training in keeping safe online next term. Many thanks to Barnardos for providing the online training. It is important that as parents we are aware of what our children are doing online and who they are talking to. Always be having the conversation about online safety with your children.

## Thank You!

On behalf of the Board of Management and all the staff, I would like to thank you all for your continued support during what has been very difficult times.

You have been absolutely amazing in your understanding and support of the procedures and protocols we have put in place due to COVID 19.

## School Website/Twitter



Thanks to Mr Brennan, Ms Seagrave, Ms Guinan, Mr Carroll, Ms O'Reilly and Ms Connelly for contributing to our website and Twitter feed last week. Website Views: 331,113 (1,000 views since last week) Twitter Account: 312 followers (7 new followers since last week) Information regarding the school can be sourced via

Email: [info@stthomas.ie](mailto:info@stthomas.ie)

Website: [www.stthomas.ie](http://www.stthomas.ie)

Twitter: @SaintThomasSNS.

## Weather

It is safe to say that winter has finally arrived in Tallaght!! As I have mentioned in previous Newsletters it is very important that the children are wearing jackets, gloves and hats in the mornings. While the heating will be on in the school the windows and doors have to be left open to ensure there is plenty of ventilation in the classrooms. As well as jackets, gloves and hats additional clothing like a fleece is recommended.

## Food Dudes

The children will be participating in the Food Dudes Healthy Eating, which aims to encourage children to eat more fruit and vegetables each day. The programme is managed by Bord Bia. All children will receive 5 days of fruit and vegetables- a Food Dudes Week- to help maintain the healthy eating policy in the school.

Each child has been given a Passport to Healthy Eating. This passport contains a number of fun activities and is designed to be completed with you at home during the course of the week. You can adjust the amount of food in your child's lunch box. We greatly appreciate your support with this project.



Please see below a Q & A which might help answer any questions you as a parent/guardian might have regarding antigen testing and primary schools.

**Will my child be taking antigen tests soon?**

It depends. Under the new system of rapid antigen testing at primary school level, which comes into effect from Monday 29th, tests will be made available to children where a child in their pod or table has a positive PCR test detecting Covid.

Where two or more confirmed cases of Covid -19 occur in a class, within a seven day period and outside of a single pod, antigen testing will be offered to the full class.

**So, who will administer these antigen tests?**

Tests will be posted to the parents. Parents will carry out the antigen test on the day they receive it and every second day until three tests have been done.

Significantly, the children in the pod can continue to attend school as long as they remain asymptomatic and their antigen test results are negative.

**How will the antigen results be read?**

Most antigen testing kits provide a response within 15 minutes, so it will be clear from the test whether the test result is positive or negative.

**What happens if my child tests positive from an antigen test?**

If an antigen test is positive, the child isolates at home and the child's parents log onto the HSE online portal to request a PCR test.

**If my child tests positive from a PCR test, what can I do?**

Parents of a primary school child who have been confirmed as having Covid-19 following a PCR test are asked to inform the principal.

The school principal will then inform the parents of the children in the pod of the confirmed case.

No personal details of the child will be shared. These parents will be provided with the option to receive free antigen tests for their child, which they will be able to order for delivery to their home.

**And what happens if my child develops symptoms of Covid- 19?**

If at any stage a child becomes symptomatic- with a high temperature, dry cough, etc- they should isolate at home and a PCR test should be organized. Health authorities say a "non- detected" antigen test holds no value if the child is symptomatic.

**Will antigen tests be mandatory?**

No. Antigen testing will be on a voluntary basis- as is the case with PCR testing.