

St. Luke's CE Primary School

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Friday 09 September 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

The news that Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II has died

It is with profound sadness that I am writing to you this morning, following the announcement yesterday evening that Her Late Majesty the Queen has died.

For most of us, Her Late Majesty the Queen has reigned over this country and the Commonwealth for our entire lives, providing leadership and stability when there has been so much uncertainty. She has provided a remarkable example of truly devoted and humble public service, committed to serving even in these most recent and now last few days of her life. I am sure that she will forever remain a source of inspiration to us all, someone whose faith supported her and gave her hope throughout her life.

As a school, we join the voices around the world in mourning her death and our prayers are with the King and the Royal Family.

In this letter I want to share with you how as a school, we will be responding to this very sad news.

Start of year communication

There is now a ten day period of national mourning and as you would expect, our school will participate appropriately.

Today, I had drafted a 'Start of Year' letter to share with you, ahead of starting the general newsletter next week. In that letter I was going to share the successes of our school last year and priorities for the year ahead.

Within the context of this news yesterday, this no longer feels appropriate.

Instead, by email today, you will receive the Parent Calendar with staffing information listed and a few pieces of information that you need to know now.

Then, after Her Late Majesty the Queen's funeral, I will write to you again, to share the planned letter.

The normal newsletter will resume on Friday next week.

Events

During this period of national mourning, we will not be holding celebratory events in school.

Instead of the normal Celebration Collective Worship today, the children will stay in class. Teachers will seek to provide the children with an opportunity to reflect on her Late Majesty the Queen's life, enabling those children who wish to share a prayer for her to do so.

On Monday, Mother Tracy will lead Mass in school and the Mass will include prayers for both her Late Majesty the Queen and also our new King, Charles III, and his family.

It is not long ago that we were joyfully celebrating the Late Queen's Platinum Jubilee, with special services and events in our school, and in due course there will be a special school assembly of thanksgiving for the life of Her Late Majesty.

Emotional Support

The sad news of the death of Her Late Majesty The Queen will affect us all differently. We are especially mindful of children's own experiences of death and bereavement.

School staff will seek to answer children's questions and to acknowledge any sadness that they feel, emphasising that it is normal to feel sad and that we in school, and families at home, are there to support and care for them in these safe places – home and school.

If we become aware that some children are finding this news very difficult to manage, perhaps it has triggered memories of other losses that they have experienced, we will make sure to refer to you to discuss how we can support them, as we have a number of sources of support available in school.

On Monday, there will be a Book of Condolences, in our main Reception, and children as well as yourselves, are very welcome to write in there.

Father Tom has asked me to also let you know that there will be a Book of Condolences in Christ Church. It will be accessible between 9am and 6pm each day and you are very welcome to visit, light a candle in church for her Late Majesty the Queen and pray if you wish to do so.

School Closure

You may be wondering whether school will be closing at all.

For the moment, schools across the country will be remaining open. If we are notified of a public holiday, I will inform you immediately.

I am in receipt of information on a regular basis and I will keep you updated of any developments as and when they arise.

With our young children we fully appreciate the importance of striking the right balance. We need to acknowledge their feelings but in such a way that our shared grief does not cause anxiety or worry for them. This is a responsibility that we understand at St. Luke's and will do our very best to fulfil.

Bishop Sarah has recorded a message that we have been asked to share with you all: <https://www.london.anglican.org/articles/a-message-from-the-bishop-of-london/>

Yours sincerely,



Rebecca Abrahams
Executive headteacher