

St. Mark's Catholic Primary School

Headteacher
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Monday 4th January 2020

IMPORTANT INFORMATION – SCHOOL WILL BE OPEN TO KEY WORKER AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN ONLY FROM TUESDAY 5TH JANUARY

Dear Parents and Carers,

On 31st December, Birmingham (alongside many other Local Authorities across the country) was placed in Tier 4 due to a very rapid rise in the rate of COVID infections. For months, staff at St. Mark's have adhered to robust safety measures to keep themselves and others safe in school, however, you will have heard in the press, teachers have been advised by their Unions not to return to work in these unsafe circumstances. As a result, a number of our teachers have informed us that they will follow this advice and therefore our staffing levels are insufficient to allow us to open school safely. We have a duty of care to provide a safe working environment for children and staff. We recognise that this will cause inconvenience but please understand that this decision was not taken lightly and the safety of ALL involved was considered.

Key Worker and Vulnerable Children

If you are a key worker or your child is classed as vulnerable then your child will be able to attend school as normal. However, please provide the school with evidence as soon as possible as we are aware that the number of key workers may have changed since our last count and it is important the information, we have is current. You can find further information detailing the criteria for vulnerable children and Key Workers/Critical workers on the following Government website (this was updated on 31st December 2020):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

Remote Learning

Online learning will begin tomorrow (Tuesday 5th January) for children who do not fall in to the two categories which are Key Worker children and Vulnerable children. Children should access their online learning via their BGfL accounts. Staff in school will be reviewing online learning this week and our aim is to incorporate online video learning with pupils at home so that we can maximise progress. We will update you on the changes to home learning once these have been agreed. Staff will be making telephone calls this

week to all children learning from home. If your telephone number has changed, please inform the school office immediately. It is an expectation that children who are learning from home complete online learning as staff will be giving feedback online and contact will be made with parents if children are not engaging with online learning.

Please see the following booklet on our school website; '**A Guide for ALL PARENTS in the event of school closure or self-isolation**'. This booklet is available to help you support your child with their home learning. Your feedback in the Summer informed us that children benefitted greatly from video learning so included in the home learning plan is the Oak Academy Website resources. The children have been using the BGfL secure platform for some time now and are very confident and able on this, but if you need any support with remote learning as it is an expectation for ALL children, please contact the school office.

Please understand that Birmingham is now in Tier 4 and these arrangements have been made to keep you and others safe.

In Tier 4, you Must STAY AT HOME unless you have a 'reasonable excuse'.
More information on this can be found on the government website:
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tier-4-stay-at-home>

As we are in Tier 4, we will continue to take the following measures in school:

Hand Sanitizing

- Children will continue to wash/sanitise their hands at regular intervals in the day. We have ample hand sanitiser stations fitted around the school.

Ventilation

- Despite the cold weather, we continue to keep rooms and areas ventilated as much as possible by having doors and windows open. The heating is of course on given the cold weather but please ensure your child is dressed suitably with a vest, school polo shirt and school jumper/cardigan. (All uniform must be labelled).

Covid Symptoms and Tests

If you or anyone in your household displays any of the following symptoms, please ensure you get them tested immediately.

The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

- **a high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- **a new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)

- a **loss or change to your sense of smell or taste** – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

Most people with coronavirus have at least 1 of these symptoms.

If you or anyone in your household displays any of the main symptoms of coronavirus, you must:

1. Get a test to check if you have coronavirus as soon as possible.
2. Inform the school office immediately.
3. You and anyone you live with should stay at home and not have visitors until you get your test result – only leave your home to have a test.
4. Anyone in your support bubble should also stay at home if you have been in close contact with them since your symptoms started or during the 48 hours before they started.

Use the NHS 111 online coronavirus service if:

- you're worried about your symptoms
- you're not sure what to do

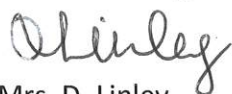
➔ [Use the NHS 111 online coronavirus service](#)

Call 111 if you cannot get help online. Do not go to places like a GP surgery, hospital or pharmacy.

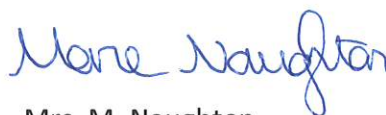
I understand that the new Tier 4 restrictions have brought additional worry and anxiety for many of us, please ensure you are doing things to keep yourself and your family not only physically healthy but mentally healthy too. If you have any concerns about your child's mental health, please contact your child's class teacher via the school office email at: enquiry@stmarkrc.bham.sch.uk.

We must work together, to ensure we are keeping ourselves and each other as safe as possible. If your child will be attending school tomorrow, please speak to your child before school opens tomorrow to remind them of the importance of social distancing and hand washing.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs. D. Linley
Headteacher



Mrs. M. Naughton
Chair of Governors