



St Mary's Catholic School

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where everyone can succeed



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Dear Parents and Carers

Hope you and your family are safe and well.

Student routines- reminders and updates

Given that we have now completed our first half term under the new health and safety measures that we have had to introduce in school, we thought that it would be helpful to share with you some reminders and updates to student routines and expectations.

As you are aware, since September students and staff have been wearing face masks in corridors and all communal areas in school where social distancing measures are not easy to maintain. This is now mandatory in all Secondary Schools during the national lockdown period. Therefore, we shall continue to embed this policy fully. This includes when students are walking up and down the student pathways and when lining up to enter the school building.

We have been incredibly impressed by our students who are wearing face masks at all of the appropriate times in school in a very mature and sensible manner, without any issues at all. We would like to ask for your continued support in ensuring that your child wears a facemask at all times when using public transport on the journey to and from school. We have also spoken to students about the importance of social distancing on yards during social times and on their journey home. We have reminded students that they should not be travelling in large groups, they should be social distancing between themselves and from members of the public and their behaviour should be excellent at all times. We would really appreciate if you could reiterate these messages to your child at home as our overriding concern is the health and safety of our students.

To further support health and safety in school, the government guidance outlines that it is important to ensure the school building is well ventilated and a comfortable teaching environment is maintained. Therefore, since September, the good weather has allowed us to have windows and doors in classrooms and other areas in school opened throughout the day to ensure excellent ventilation. As colder winter weather approaches we, as well as other schools, have been reviewing this area. Therefore, in line with government and health and safety guidance, we are moving to refreshing and changing the air regularly in rooms, rather than having windows opened constantly. This means windows in classrooms will be opened for a short period at the start of each lesson to allow air flow and then closed thereafter to ensure a warm and safe environment for students and staff. Windows will also be opened fully during breaks and lunchtimes, when the rooms are unoccupied. Furthermore, whilst ensuring a regular change of air in occupied rooms is recommended by Public Health, they are clear that this has very low-level mitigation compared to other factors such as social distancing and good hand hygiene, which we will continue to embed as normal.

Unless the weather conditions are extremely poor, students will be spending social time outside on their yards and therefore, as we approach colder weather, please ensure that your child brings a coat to school to wear whilst outside, to keep him/her warm. Hoodies should not be worn under blazers and as per our uniform policy, students are not allowed to wear coats inside of the school building.

As you know, we have continued to lead assemblies during last half-term, in line with government guidance that allows students in one bubble/group to meet for an assembly or other school gathering. At St Mary's, we decided to organise these in half year group assemblies to support social distancing even further. However, we have been reviewing this area over the half-term and decided that, certainly through until the Christmas break, we will deliver assemblies remotely to all students in their form classes each Monday morning. Assemblies will continue to be delivered by members of the Senior Leadership Team, Key Stage Leaders and Heads of Year and will continue to explore the theme of the week with reflections, prayers, videos and music. This is an important part of our ethos that we value greatly and want to continue to share with our students.

We are so proud of our students and their excellent behaviour in school, as well as their full compliance to all of the new health and safety measures that we have had to introduce at this time. Thank you for your continued support and many best wishes.

Yours faithfully,

Miss Lague
Assistant Headteacher