



St Mary's Catholic School

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where everyone can succeed



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Dear Parents and Carers

I hope you and your families are safe and well.

Our students continue to progress very well during the summer term, demonstrating a very positive attitude.

Thankfully, the national situation regarding COVID-19 seems more optimistic and the situation in school is also very encouraging. We continue to embed very robust health and safety routines and, since I last wrote to you at the end of March, there have only been 2 cases of students testing positive for COVID-19. We very much hope that this continues and positive cases continue to remain low in the wider community.

As you may know, in updated DfE guidance published this week, it was outlined that from 17th May, in line with the government's Step 3 of the roadmap, face coverings are no longer recommended for students in classrooms or communal areas in school. However, the government and Newcastle Public Health do recommend wearing face masks outside classrooms, where social distancing is not possible (for example, when moving around in corridors). Therefore, **from Monday 17th May, in line with government policy, students will no longer have to wear face masks in classrooms. Students and staff will continue to wear face masks in corridors and when moving around the school. This feels like a measured and proportionate change, whilst continuing to keep everyone safe.**

Thank you very much for your continued support in ensuring that your child completes twice weekly lateral flow tests at home. It is important to remember that this testing is to identify asymptomatic cases and it does not replace symptomatic testing, which is the PCR test taken at a NHS testing site. If you or your child has any symptoms, you should self-isolate immediately, book a PCR test and follow national guidelines. Other members of the household, including siblings, should also isolate until the test result is received. You should not send your child to school if he/she or any other member of the household has any COVID-19 symptoms, until they have been tested and a negative result is received.

Year 11 and 13 students continue to work hard to contribute towards the broad range of evidence that will be used to determine their final grades. This work will be completed over this half-term. Year 13 students will leave school on Friday, 28th May and a further letter will follow from Mr McKeating, Assistant Headteacher, with details about a 'leavers' celebration for Year 13 on their last day. Year 11 students will also have their final day of normal timetabled lessons on Friday, 28th May. However, Year 11 students remain on our school roll until 25th June. Therefore, in the 3 weeks after May half-term, Year 11 students will be invited into school to attend a range of different sessions, including Sixth Form transition and taster sessions for those progressing to St Mary's Sixth Form, and Career Guidance sessions for students following a different pathway. All Year 11 students will also be invited to a 'leavers' celebration on Friday 25th June. Miss Lague, Director of Student Support, will be writing to Year 11 parents with further details.

Thank you for your continued support.

Very best wishes,

Miss Patterson
Headteacher