



St Thomas More Primary

Erith Grove, Easterside, Middlesbrough, TS4 3QH

Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust

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20th March 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Coronavirus update – school closure to most pupils

At this difficult time we want to thank you for your continued support and reassure you that, as a Catholic Trust, we are doing our utmost to support all of our children and families. As you will be aware, the government has instructed schools throughout the country **to close the school to almost all children after this Friday until further notice**. Over the coming days, the Trust phase 1 response plan will be rolled out and this initial phase will see all 26 school sites open to the students identified by Mr Williamson on Wednesday 18th March.

As advised by the government, we will do all we can to stay open for the children of key workers and children with particular needs:

The government has defined those as follows:

- Pupils who have a social worker and pupils with an educational health care plan.
- Key workers: NHS staff, police, others in frontline services and children with certain needs.

Please see link below:

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

The government guidance clearly states that many parents working in these sectors may be able to ensure their child is kept at home and every child who can be safely cared for at home, should be.

Please, therefore, follow these key principles:

1) If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be.

2) If a child needs specialist support, is vulnerable or has a parent who is a key worker, then educational provision will be available for them.

All other children will need to stay at home, so we ask that you do not send your child into school from Monday onwards.

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For those pupils attending school, usual catering services will continue, although menu choices may differ.

Please note that this is a national closure – as you may have heard in the news – so while it is a challenging situation, we are not alone. We will re-open fully as soon as we are directed to do so by the Government.

All schools within Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trusty (NPCAT) have detailed plans in place to ensure that your child's education is disrupted as little as possible while they are unable to attend their usual lessons.

Teachers will continue to set work and maintain communication with students through the school's electronic platform, Google Classroom. Children and parents can access this, as explained in the step by step guide that has been sent home in a letter which can also be found on our school website.

Pupils will be set weekly work by their class teachers. This will include daily Maths, English and topic tasks that must be completed each day with all completed by the end of a Friday, so new tasks can be set by teachers on a Sunday. Work can be completed in children's Home Learning books that they have been given by their teachers, or uploaded electronically to Google Classroom.

Pupils can contact their teachers via email using Google Classroom and parents can contact school via phone if they have any particular queries. Class teachers will aim to keep in touch with you on a weekly basis through a telephone call.

If your child usually receives free school meals we will also be in touch with more information about how we will continue to provide this, with support from a scheme that the government has just announced.

We will also provide printed work for those children who do not have access to the internet. This can be collected from the school office every Monday, as required.

We understand that parents and pupils who were due to sit examinations this summer will be particularly concerned about the measures the Government has taken. We will update you when we have more information from the Department for Education about this.

Please continue to monitor our school website www.stm.npcat.org.uk, where we will be posting regular updates. As parents, please be assured that we will do our best to enable weekly telephone communication via a dedicated teacher, as well as access to a wide range of learning resources to enable your child to continue their learning journey.

The coronavirus outbreak is an unprecedented situation that is affecting so many aspects of our everyday lives and we know that closing the school will cause considerable difficulties. Please be assured that we are doing everything we can to assist you and your family. Our thoughts and prayers are with you all during this difficult time. Thank you for your continued cooperation and support.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Apolloni

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