



St. Margaret Mary's Catholic Junior School

Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council • St. Margaret Mary's Catholic Junior School • Pilch Lane • Liverpool • L14 0JG
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Head Teacher – Mrs R Wilkinson

16th March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

This letter aims to update you on our preparations within school in response to the spread of Coronavirus (Covid 19) 1.45 p.m. on 16.3.2020. Updates from the Department for Education, Knowsley Council and Public Health England have been used as a basis for our planning. We recognise that people will understandably be concerned at this time, therefore we just want to reassure you that the school is monitoring the situation closely, is in regular contact with relevant authorities and has comprehensive plans in place. This will be a worrying time for you all and would like to assure you that comprehensive plans are in place in school.

Currently, there are no school closures in Knowsley. The Local Authority will continue to advise schools of actions in line with Government recommendations.

Day to Day Response

We are encouraging all of our staff and children to follow Public Health guidance and keep high levels of personal hygiene; this includes making sure that we are directing children/students and staff to wash their hands: before leaving home, on arrival at school, after using the toilet, after breaks and sporting activities, before food preparation, before eating any food, including snacks & before leaving school.

Children can bring hand sanitiser to school with them to use throughout the day if they wish but please be assured that we have plenty of hand wash available in school for children to use.

Our standard cleaning processes will continue but are also taking extra precautions within our cleaning arrangements and making sure that frequent contact points such as door handles are cleaned more regularly. Our Cleaning Provider has assured us that plans are in place to provide an enhanced or deep clean quickly as and when required. We have talked to the children/students about the virus and how it is spread so that they can make sensible choices and follow the Public Health Guidance and ensure they carry tissues to 'Catch it, Kill it, Bin it.'

Signs and Symptoms of COVID-19

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are:

- new continuous cough and/or
- high temperature

For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild infection

Generally, these infections can cause more severe symptoms in people with weakened immune systems, older people, and those with long-term conditions like diabetes, cancer and chronic lung disease. There is no evidence that children are more affected than other age groups – and it is important to remember that very few cases have been reported in children so far.

If you or a family member present with these symptoms the advice of health professionals is to self-isolate for 7 days. Guidance on

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-people-with-confirmed-or-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

After 7 days, if anyone is still unwell, then seek medical advice NHS 111 online. If you have no internet access call NHS 111. If symptoms worsen during your self-isolation, seek prompt medical advice. If children feel better after 7 days and no longer have a temperature, they can return to school. The guidance does say that a cough may persist for several weeks in some people, despite the Coronavirus infection having cleared.

Reporting Absence:

Parents should report absences in the usual manner, any absences relating to Covid 19 will be coded 'Y' and will be authorised.

Communication

School will continue to communicate with parents via the School App, Twitter @smmjnr and the school website. It is important that families only follow the advice from school/official channels and not from other sources and/or non-school related social media to inform their decision making

Planning in Place:

The Council is working to ensure that any local response to COVID-19 is co-ordinated and services to schools are included in this planning. Contingency plans are in place for Council services to schools and we are receiving regular updates in relation to this.

An important part of our preparations are making sure that we have contingency plans for a variety of scenarios, including a temporary closure if instructed to do so by Public Health England. We have made the decision to cancel any non-essential visitors to school and staff have been instructed to not attend any non-essential meetings offsite. Currently, we have planned for 3 separate scenarios:

1. Instruction from Government to close for a specified period of time. If the government instructs schools to close we will follow this advice and children will be provided work to complete at home. In the event it being an extended closure students will be able to access work via our school google drive. Further information will follow this week.
2. Instruction to implement social distancing and limit the contact of groups of people. If this is advised school will communicate this to parents via the channels listed above.
3. Staff absence levels cause a need for closure – if this scenario does occur then school will again contact parents/carers via the channels above.

Forthcoming Events at School:

Information for SATS preparation will be provided as soon as possible.

Please note that the following events will no longer take place; Parent Forum, Coffee Morning Friday 20th March, Race Night Friday 20th March, Rebound Dance Performance 24th March (To be confirmed), Speech Choir 25th March, Assertive Mentoring conversations (parents to receive their child latest grading) & Passion Play 2nd April.

We will continue to review all trips, events, fixtures and visits and will update as and when decisions are made. At present this will be on a case by case basis.

We hope that implementing such plans will not be necessary but we will always make decisions with the needs, health and welfare of children first.

Thank you for your continued support and your understanding in this matter.

Yours faithfully

Rebecca Wilkinson
Head Teacher



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