

St Joseph's Catholic Academy

A Leading Edge Technology & Applied Learning College

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(Acting) Headteacher: Mr P Mitchell
Chair of Directors: Mrs G Kilgour



Dear Parent / Carer

17 March 2020

Thank you for your ongoing patience and support during these challenging times, it is greatly appreciated. We wish to reassure you that the Trust and partner schools are working closely together on a co-ordinated approach for our students and staff. The health, safety and wellbeing of all of those in our community is important to us and, as such, we are taking the stance of the government seriously.

School leaders have been analysing current staffing levels as a result of the updated government guidance that anyone with Coronavirus symptoms including their families / housemates should self-isolate for 14 days and that those who are at increased risk of severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19) are to be particularly stringent in following social distancing measures. This group includes those who are pregnant, those who have an underlying health condition and those who are over the age of 70. As a result of this, the school has a significantly reduced staffing level and does not have the required number of staff available to teach, support and supervise students safely.

It has therefore been decided that it is necessary to close St Joseph's Catholic Academy from a safety perspective for a minimum of 14 days in line with government guidance and Public Health England have been informed. We will review this position in a timely manner. The school website, social media and text messaging service will be updated with the latest position.

This is an unusual set of circumstances, but I do wish to assure all of our students and families that we have a comprehensive plan in place to ensure the impact on our students is minimised. However, this plan will only be successful if students understand that the closure is absolutely not a holiday and that students must meet our expectations to complete work set. Teachers have prepared work for every pupil, which can be accessed via our school website. This can be found by following 'School Life' and then 'Home Study Work'.

We are aware that for some families school is a source of a guaranteed meal for their child. We would like to direct families experiencing difficulties to community foodbank Hebburn Helps, Coleridge Square off Wordsworth Avenue NE31 1QD, 0191 489 9707. Our school is very proud of our close connection with Hebburn Helps and know they offer our community support.

We are also aware that a number of our students rely on support from school for their mental health wellbeing. We would like to remind families of Kooth which is a free, confidential online mental health service for children and young people that offers online counselling. Please follow the link to find out more: www.kooth.com

I am confident that by working in partnership between home and school our young people can come out of this period of turbulence without having their education adversely impacted.

Your sincerely

Acting Headteacher



Northern Saints
Teaching School Alliance

Caritas Christi Urget Nos
'The love of Christ spurs us on'



Northern Saints
Catholic Education Trust