



# St Mary's Catholic School

Benton Park Road, Newcastle upon Tyne. NE7 7PE  
*where everyone can succeed*



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Dear Parents and Carers

School is sadly closed from Monday for all children except for an anticipated small number of vulnerable children or children of critical workers 'who cannot be safely cared for at home' and 'absolutely need to attend' (see attached **GOV.UK - Guidance for schools... on maintaining educational provision**). The following key extracts are also from this Guidance.

- *The government has asked parents to keep children at home, wherever possible, and asked schools to stay open only for those children who absolutely need to attend.*
- *Schools remain safe places for children but the fewer children making the journey to school and the fewer children in schools, the lower the risk that the virus can spread and infect vulnerable individuals in wider society.*
- *Schools are being asked to provide care for a limited number of children – children who are vulnerable and children whose parents are critical to the Covid-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.*
- *Many parents working in critical sectors may be able to ensure their child is kept at home. Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be.*
- *Parents should ensure children (not at school) are not mixing socially in a way which can spread the virus. They should observe the same social distancing principles as adults.*

The key message is, therefore, that the vast majority of parents are being asked to keep their children at home and that schools are asked to stay open only for those children who absolutely need to attend. **I am urging all parents/carers to please stick closely to this, for the good of our children and staff who absolutely have to attend, as well as to curb the spread of the virus for the good of all.**

**If you fall into a Government defined 'critical worker' category** as per the attached Government guidance, **AND your child cannot be safely cared for at home**, please complete the attached form and ask your child to bring this to school on Monday so we can confirm the need for each child to attend. If you cannot access the form, please provide your child with a note on Monday, with brief details about what your critical work is.

You and your child (years 7 -10 and year 12) will receive separate advice and guidance about home learning. Much has been done in a short space of time to allow children's education to continue, albeit in far from ideal circumstances. I am grateful to our staff for this excellent effort. Please be patient if 'learning from home' has teething problems. You can expect periodic communication/guidance from the school about this and other relevant information during the closure.

Today, we are holding final assemblies for all year groups, wishing children well, urging them to stay safe and to follow social distancing guidance. Parents of children in Years 11 and 13 should look out for a separate communication from me addressing the issue of qualifications (as soon as information is received – nb there is nothing as yet), as well as on-going advice and support about how we will continue to offer support to students who need to keep their learning going in preparation for Sixth Form/college or university, as well as advice and support re transition from Y11 and from Y13.

I hope you all stay safe and well during this difficult time and I will ensure we maintain regular communication with you.

Thank you again for your continued support and understanding. It is appreciated.

National Teaching School  
designated by



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Teaching & Leadership



Yours faithfully



J Foster - Headteacher