



St Mary's

Catholic Primary School
and Nursery

*Learning and living
together through faith
and education*

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Headteacher: Mrs S M Fau-Goodwin

Friday 20th March 2020

Dear Parents/carers,

Re: Coronavirus update – School Closure

Following on from my last update, I am now writing to let you know that **we have now been instructed to close the school to almost all children today, Friday 20th March at 3.10pm until further notice.**

Staff have been devastated by this news. It has been a tough week for everyone in the school team. The teaching staff collectively have responded very quickly and you will find lots of home learning materials have already been uploaded to the website. The admin team have done an amazing front line job as have the Glean Team and site staff.

Thank you to you and your families for your patience, trust and understanding over the past few days. It has been a whirlwind.

At 1.00am this morning a document was published 'Guidance for School, Colleges and Local Authorities on maintaining Educational provision.' This outlines the official guidance as to the roles which are classed as critical to the COVID-19 response. We are forced to follow this guidance strictly. Please see our website for further information.

The school closures are to further limit the spread of the Coronavirus. The guidance states 'the fewer children making the journey to school, and the fewer children in educational settings, the lower the risk that the virus can spread and infect vulnerable individuals in wider society.'

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

This is a national closure – so while it is a challenging situation, we are not alone. We will re-open fully as soon as we can and we will let you know when this is by posting information on our school website.

However, we wish to support our families as best we can and we have made arrangements to provide care for a **limited** number of children. These are children who have an attached Social Worker or and EHCP.

Regardless of a child's status or your key worker role, if you can keep your child at home and have any opportunity for childcare at home or elsewhere, then your child must stay away from school. Children with an EHCP will continue to receive our support.



The key principles are

- If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be.
- If a child needs specialist support, is vulnerable or has a parent who is a critical worker, then educational provision will be available for them.
- Parents should not rely for childcare upon those who are advised to be in the stringent social distancing category such as grandparents, friends, or family members with underlying conditions.
- Parents should also do everything they can to ensure children are not mixing socially in a way which can continue to spread the virus. They should observe the same social distancing principles as adults.
- Residential special schools, boarding schools and special settings continue to care for children wherever possible.

We will provide childcare for key workers and the vulnerable groups. We are unsure as to what length of time this will be for. We will only be able to keep this provision going whilst we have sufficient key staff members available. If staff absence increases beyond our skeleton structure, there will be no other option but to close the school to all children for their own safety.

I must re-emphasise the importance of keeping your child at home wherever possible. School childcare must be a last resort in order to stop people from being ill and possibly worse.

If you are a key worker and it is your day off, your child must stay at home. If you are a key worker and you have alternative options, such as a family member or friend, they must stay at home. If you are a key worker who works different shifts and only require partial care, the rest of the time your child must stay at home. If you can/ are working from home, your child must stay at home. We have to keep the school as safe an environment for all for as long as possible. By not following the national advice and guidance, others may become ill.

Key workers will be asked to provide evidence. This is not us being awkward, we are following strict rules and want to ensure those in need are prioritised and the process is completely fair. This is a stressful time for everyone.

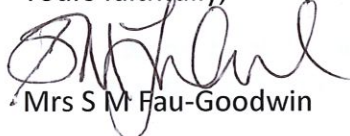
If, as a keyworker, you require childcare, please email our dedicated email address keyworkers@stmarysrc.cheshire.sch.uk

Please remember: if you or your child feels ill and you want to know what to do next, please use [NHS 111 online](#).

Thank you again for your continued support. If we all pull together and do what we must, I am sure that we will minimize the spread and our lives can return to normal.

We will keep updating the website with any further information. In the meantime, please keep safe and take care of yourselves and your families.

Yours faithfully,



Mrs S M Fau-Goodwin

Head Teacher