



25 September 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

As we approach the half way mark of this half term, I wanted to write to you all with some updates and some key information.

Firstly, I would like to thank you for your ongoing support. Our students have returned to school in smart uniform, on time, and well prepared for working under Covid restrictions. All our staff are reminding students daily about maintaining social distance, wearing a face mask, washing their hands regularly, and cooperating with the changes in a respectful manner.

The extended lessons, our improved behaviour for learning system, and the introduction of our 'TOP' award for students each lesson, have allowed staff and students to refocus on keeping teaching and learning as our core business. Staff are working incredibly hard to ensure standards continue to improve across the school, whilst managing Covid restrictions.

Overall, it has been a very impressive start to the year. Thank you.

As you will be aware, there are currently a high number of Covid cases across Greater Manchester, which has also affected some members of our community at St Matthew's. In line with the national guidance, this has meant that we have needed to ask some of our students and staff to self-isolate at home. This is a precautionary measure but it is an important step to take in order to help prevent transmission of the virus. **You will be informed immediately if this ever applies to your child. Please ensure we have up to date contact details.**

Recently, some parents expressed concern that they were not given further details regarding the identity of a positive case. I must respectfully remind you that it is not appropriate for us to share this information with you, since it could compromise any confidentiality across our community.

I do understand, as a parent, that these decisions can cause anxiety and indeed inconvenience. Please be assured that in the event of any positive case, we work closely with Public Health England AND our Local Authority to ensure the correct procedure is taken. Any decisions regarding which staff/students are asked to self-isolate are carefully checked by them. **We do not make this decision in isolation.**

Please can I also remind you that in these times of Covid, in a similar way to GP surgeries, we cannot allow people on site without an appointment. We are always keen to discuss any concerns you have, but these conversations must be by telephone/email. In **rare cases**, appointments will be made, and we will ask that face masks are worn and social distancing measures are adhered to.

From next week, we will be launching our extra-curricular provision for students. I look forward to seeing many of them join in once again. We will also be celebrating our 'stars of the school' as part of our new rewards strategy. Finally, we will be asking you for some feedback that we can

share with our teachers. I am very conscious that they deserve recognition for the work they are all doing to keep our school safe, and to continue to raise standards for your child.

Once again, I thank you for working in partnership with us to achieve the best for all our young people, at this particularly challenging time.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mrs Murden". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'M'.

Mrs Murden  
Headteacher