



ST. MATTHEW'S
Roman Catholic High School

We Pray, We Care, We Achieve

16 March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am writing to update you on our response to the national Coronavirus situation. I know that you will be concerned, and I would like to reassure you of our plans.

At present we are following nationally agreed advice and we have support from the local authority in managing this issue.

We have already used form time and assemblies to reinforce key messages to our students around personal hygiene, hand washing and 'catching, killing and binning' coughs and sneezes. I have asked all staff to continue to educate our young people and to reduce any anxiety that the students may have.

As parents/carers, I understand you will be making attendance decisions according to government advice daily. Students and staff should not attend school if they show symptoms of the virus (**new, persistent cough or a high temperature**). It is important to follow the advice issued by Public Health England and anyone displaying these specific symptoms should self-isolate for seven days. You can find all you need to know about preventing the spread of the virus and what to do if you think you or your child might be infected here:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Across school, I have asked staff to reduce unnecessary meetings at this time, including those that involve external visitors coming into school. We will postpone form tutor meetings, parents' evenings and other after school activities. Specific details regarding sports fixtures will be shared with individual teams appropriately.

We do have a contingency plan should we be required to undertake a full or partial closure. This includes ensuring the continuity of education for all, but especially for year 11 and year 10 students who are preparing for external examinations.

With regards forthcoming external examinations, we will follow official guidance from JCQ, OfQual and examination boards. Any decisions about the summer exam schedule will be taken at a national level to ensure fairness for all candidates. At present all planned controlled assessments and practical examinations that are scheduled to take place in the coming weeks are planned to take place as normal.

In the event that the decision is taken to close the school, we have put in place resource packs and we will offer online study. Details of these will be shared with students, parents and carers. We will maintain lines of communication with parents, carers, students and staff via email, text messages, our school website and social media.

Please be reassured that all decisions will be taken in the best interest of the health and wellbeing of our students, staff and the wider school community. To any members of our community who are working in the health sector at this time, please accept our heartfelt thanks and best wishes.

I thank you all for your ongoing support and understanding at this uncertain time.

Yours faithfully

Mrs H Murden
Headteacher