

The Newman Catholic Collegiate



St Margaret Ward Catholic Academy
Little Chell Lane
Tunstall
Stoke on Trent
ST6 6LZ

Telephone: 01782 883036

Email: ibeardmore@stmarysnewman.co.uk

Accounting Officer: Mr Ian Beardmore

17th March 2020

RE: COVID-19

Dear Parents and Carers

I am writing to you to inform you of some changes I have instructed schools to make in light of the developing situation with regards to coronavirus. The Directors of the collegiate met last night to give clear guidance and to offer support to all our schools. Guidance is changing daily and so advice may change.

The message is clear to schools and we are doing all we can to stay open and so ask you to support us in our efforts.

In line with government advice, you or someone you live with are now asked to stay at home for 14 days if they have either a high temperature (37.8 degrees and above), breathing difficulties or a new, continuous cough. This will help to protect others in the community while they are infectious.

The government has advised that, if a person has these symptoms, they should not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital. They do not need to contact NHS 111 as the NHS will not be testing people who are self-isolating with mild symptoms. The government is clear that, if a pupil/student or a member of staff is in self-isolation, they:

- must stay at home.
- must not go to public areas, and must not use public transport or taxis.

The key advice remains as follows:

Do:

- wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds.
- always wash your hands when you get home or into work or school.
- use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available.
- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze.
- put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards.
- try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell.

Do not:

- touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean.

We ask for your understanding if classes have to be merged or taught in larger groups in school due to staff being in self-isolation.

As a collegiate we have taken the following additional actions:

- Cancelled planned trips between now and the end of term.
- Cancelled parents' evenings and other events between now and the end of term.
- Restricted staff attending training etc. during the day.
- Cancelled swimming lessons for pupils.
- Cancelled after school clubs ran by external providers. (your school will communicate this)
- Stopped parents coming to school events as much as possible including assemblies.
- Instructed additional cleaning to take place in all schools.

I hope you recognise that the above actions are being taken in the best interests of your child, the staff and the whole community.

I wish to reassure you that parents will be kept fully informed by the school and kindly request that rumours are not spread over social media. This will simply cause unnecessary panic.

Once again, I thank you, in anticipation, for your support in these most unusual times. Please continue to remember the vulnerable in our society, all coronavirus sufferers and their families in your thoughts and prayers.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Beardmore', written over a light grey grid background.

Mr Beardmore
Senior Executive Leader
On behalf of the Board of Directors