



ST MARGARET WARD CATHOLIC ACADEMY



Little Chell Lane
Tunstall
Stoke on Trent
ST6 6LZ

Telephone: 01782 883000
Pupil Absence Line: 01782 883003
Email: office@smwca.org.uk
Website: <http://www.stmargaretward.co.uk>

Principal: Mr. D. McKenna B.Soc.Sc. MA. PGCE. NPQH.
04A/Information/Year8/PJ/LB

2nd March 2021

Dear Parent / Carer of Year 8

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT HOW WE WILL OPERATE FROM MARCH 2021

Our eyes are firmly fixed forwards to welcoming your child back to St Margaret Ward Catholic Academy in March.

I can now confirm the following for Year 8 students:

- **Testing for those who have given consent will be on Tuesday 9 March. You will be notified when the booking system opens to book your child's test.**
- **All students return for face to face lessons on Wednesday 10 March.**

I know and fully understand that you may be anxious and worried about what will happen in March, and the purpose of this letter is to try to put your mind at rest and give you as much information we currently have about how we will operate as a community from 10 March, when your child re-joins us.

First of all, can I take this opportunity to thank you on behalf of the staff for all the support you have given to us as a school community. We fully recognise that the past weeks have been different, anxious and emotionally draining for all of us as we have had to cope again with massive changes to how we live our lives. The main point to share with your family is that we will do all that we can to welcome your child back and return to our routines and the 'normal' way of school life as quickly as possible. We are all in this together, and together we will get back to a more familiar way of life where we will deliver the highest level of education and pastoral care as we can.

For your child, much will remain the same as we left before this current lockdown. We are keeping the Year Group zones, bubbles, timetables and times of the school day. We want everything to work as it has done from September to December. The three noticeable outward changes will be:

1. The requirement for students, wherever possible, to wear face coverings in classrooms as well as in communal areas within school. There will be no requirement to wear face coverings outside the building at break and lunch times until students are directed to do this during line up.
2. There will be more ventilation in classrooms, with more windows open and doors propped open to allow fresh air to circulate.
3. The home testing for students and families who have given consent.

If, having read through this letter, you have any questions or queries, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Farrer (hfarrer@smwca.org.uk) for Years 7, 8 and 9 and Mr Johnson (pjohnson@smwca.org.uk) for Years 10, 11 and Post 16 students.

Please read the remainder of this letter very carefully. The rationale for this is that everyone's health and safety is our number one priority.

If you require this information in a different format, please contact the school.



Year 8 Parent and Student Information

- It is mandatory that your child attends school and is on time from 10 March.
- If your child feels ill, or is showing any symptoms of COVID-19, then it is essential that they do not come to school. Please email the school absence line: studentabsence@smwca.org.uk
- You must follow the advice and guidance of the government in getting your child tested.
- If the issue is directly related to COVID-19 and you need to inform us of symptoms or a positive test result please use: c19@smwca.org.uk
- **Year 8 students will re-join us on 10 March starting at 8.35 each day. School will continue to begin for Year 8 students at 8.35 am each day until further notice. Please see later in the information on where you should drop your child off.**
- Face to face timetabled lessons will re-commence on 10 March. This will be week 1 of the school timetable.
- We strongly recommend that all students bring their own re-usable water bottle that can be refilled with the newly installed water fountains in the school.
- We would strongly recommend that all students bring their own small bottle of hand sanitiser, which can be refilled on a nightly basis.
- All students must attend in full school uniform and also have their school bag with their essentials for learning in there. In terms of clarity for all parents, the school designates that the following are considered as vital.
- The essentials for learning are:
 - Pencil case; which will include:
 - 2 pens (black or blue)
 - A green pen
 - A pencil
 - A ruler
 - A rubber
 - A sharpener
 - A glue stick
 - A calculator (*The school highly recommends the following model, which can be bought from the Maths department at a cheaper price - Casio fx 83 GTX*)
 - A reading book
 - A planner – this will be given to students on the first day. If lost or damaged, a replacement planner must be bought at a cost of £2.00
- Guidance from the government states that we should not lend out and share any of these items with students, as this may increase the risk of virus transmission.
- Please drop your child off either in the bus lane area at the front of the school, or by driving down the main drive and dropping off by the middle gates then exiting along Stross Avenue
- There will be no vehicle access for parents past the middle gates. There will be a one-way system in operation, so vehicles must leave the site by turning left onto Stross Avenue.
- The outside of the school site will be open to students from 8.10 am. Students can access the site via:
 - The Greenway gate
 - The main drive
 - The top path by the bus lane
- The inside of the school buildings will remain locked and closed for all students until 8.30 am. Because of this, we are strongly advising that all students wear a suitable waterproof outdoor coat. The coat should be plain and have minimal branding. Please note that denim jackets / leather jackets / hooded tops are not classed as suitable coat. No student will be allowed access indoors before 8.30 am.
- Year 8 students must gather at the front of the school by the Performing Arts and Music doors. This is located by walking up along at the end of the top path.

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- At 8.30 am, the Assistant Head of Year will unlock these doors. All Year 8 students must then walk down the corridor to the end by Sports Hall and turn left into the courtyard area. No student is allowed to remain in the school building or to deviate from this route.
- This courtyard area is the designated area for all Year 8 students to gather before school each morning. This will be known as the 'Green Zone', as it will correspond with the classrooms which all Year 8 students will use.

Just like we did from September to December, at 8.35 am each day, the following will happen:

- The Year 8 Pastoral Team will assemble together in the courtyard.
- Each Form Tutor will have a laminated card with their form name on it.
- The Head and Assistant Head of Year 8 will organise the students into silent rows facing the red wall.
- Students will line up in their form register order.
- There will be a visual uniform check performed by the Form Tutor.
- If any notices are to be given to the Year Group, the Head of Year will give these.
- Your child's Form Tutor will then escort them into the building through the red doors.
- Hand sanitiser will be available and must be applied by students as they come into the school building.
- There will be at least a 2-metre gap between the Tutor and the form and the next form.
- All students must walk on the left-hand side and in single file.
- Students will be initially sat in alphabetical order in rows within their classroom.
- All students will be facing the front of the room.

Just like we did from September to December, this will happen throughout the day:

- For the majority of lessons, all Year 8 students will be based in the same classroom, apart from PE and some Maths lessons, and the subject teacher will move from room to room.
- This 'Green Zone' will be clearly marked out so that all students can see which areas of the school are for their use only.
- For some lessons, students will need to move to a specialist area of the school. For Year 8 students, this will be during PE lessons.
- On the days in which your child has PE, they must arrive in school in their PE kit. All students may also wear a pair of unbranded, plain black jogging bottoms and also wear their blazer over the top of their PE kit. Due to current government guidance, there will be no opportunity for students to get changed in and out of their PE uniform.

Just like we have done from September to December, this will happen about the use of the toilet:

- Usually at St Margaret Ward Catholic Academy, students are not allowed out of lessons to go to the toilet.
- However, these are unusual times. Students will be allowed to go to their nominated toilet during lesson times and also during their break and lunchtimes. This is to allow for social distancing and also to avoid the mixing of Year Groups at break and lunch.
- Students will be given a laminated 'Pass-Out' by their teacher to signal to other staff that they are allowed out of the lesson. This 'Pass-Out' will be wiped with a disinfectant wipe between use.
- We have allocated the toilets on the main corridor by the school library room as the Year 8 toilets. Each toilet cubicle will be clearly identified for Year 8 male or female use.

Just like we did from September to December, breaktime and lunchtime will look like this:

- Breaktimes and lunchtimes will be staggered for the whole of the school.
- The Year 8 zone for students will be the courtyard area by the staff room and the Maths department. This is the same place where all Year 8 students meet in a morning.
- Breaktime for Year 8 students will take place from 10.30 am until 10.45 am.
- Lunchtimes for Year 8 students will take place from 11.45 am until 12.15 pm.

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Just like we did from September to December, the end of the day looks like this:

- Year 8 students will finish school at 3.00 pm each day.
- Class teachers will ensure that students sanitise their hands and then escort them to the Year 8 courtyard, through the corridor from the Sports Hall to the Performing Arts and Music doors, up onto the top path and exit points will be the greenway gate, and the top path leading to the bus lane.
- Class teachers will walk with their class up to the main gates from 3.00 pm and students can be collected from Little Chell Lane and the bus stop lay by area.

Any other important information

We expect all students to behave impeccably at all times and to learn that 'Excellence is a Habit' that takes time to form and be formed with students. We all get things wrong from time to time and if your child chooses not to follow the reasonable requests of staff and follow instructions, then we will continue to hold a 'Same Day Detention' for any student who does not follow our clear and high expectations. Detentions will continue to be for either 30 minutes or 1 hour in length and be held between 3.00 pm and 4.00 pm in a designated room within the zone. Parents will be contacted by text message if this is the case.

Equally, we will continue to reward students who do as they are asked, complete work to their highest standard and continually seek to improve on their previous best and become the best version of themselves that they can be. To aid this, please find on the next pages an addendum to the Home / School Agreement. This clearly sets out what we will do and what we expect all parents to do in supporting your child at this time.

I know that this is a huge amount of revised information to share with you, but, as I am sure you will recognise, it is important that we work together to ensure that everyone who re-joins us on 11 March stays and remains safe at all times.

As I mentioned earlier, can I thank you for taking the time to read all of this information and if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Farrer who will be able to help and answer your queries.

Yours faithfully



Mr P Johnson
Vice Principal

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