



ST MARGARET WARD CATHOLIC ACADEMY



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Principal: Mr. D. McKenna B.Soc.Sc. MA. PGCE. NPQH.

04A/NewAcademicYear/Y9/PJ/LB

13th July 2021

Dear Parent / Carer

ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE START OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2021-2022 NEW YEAR 9 STUDENTS

May I start thanking you for your continued support and help over the course of what has been a very challenging academic year. I am writing to give you all information about the start of the academic year, which commences for staff and students in the week commencing 6 September 2021.

As I am sure you are aware we will be moving to Stage 4 on the Governments roadmap from 19 July. There are a number of implications for school mostly meaning that we are returning to close to normal after the summer break.

When we return in September, students will no longer be in bubbles and there will be no requirement to wear face coverings or to socially distance when dropping off or collecting your children. We will be able to return to gathering together, for example in assemblies and will of course be returning to welcoming parents and carers to school to attend events etc.

To reduce the risk of spreading any infections we will, of course, be continuing to ensure all members of the school community follow good hygiene procedure. We will continue with regular hand sanitising, cleaning around the school particularly frequently touched spots and we will continue to ensure there is good ventilation around the school.

Please could you take time to read the below government advice that will support you. You can find further information here:

[Step 4 update - what parents and carers need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/step-4-update-what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges)

The start of the academic year

At the time of writing, we have been asked to ensure that all students either starting or returning to school are invited to take part in testing of students for COVID-19, so that we can start the year as safely as possible. This is strongly advised by the government and also the school however, it is not compulsory. We have been asked to do this twice at the start of the academic year, between 3 and 5 days apart.

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



If you would like your child to take part in the testing (which we would strongly advise), you will need to do a few things first:

- 1) If you have already given consent for testing, you will not need to redo the consent form. If you did not fill out the consent form last year and you now wish to, please may I ask that you fill out a consent form first. ALL CONSENT FORMS need to be completed by **WEDNESDAY 21 JULY** please. We are unable to process the test without your consent. You will find a link to the consent form on the home page of the school website: <https://stmargaretward.co.uk/>
- 2) Either you will need to bring your child to St Margaret Ward on **Thursday 9 September** at the following times OR they will need to make their own way to school:
 - a. Surname: A to G: From 1.00 pm
 - b. Surname: H to M: From 1.45 pm
 - c. Surname: N to Z: From 2.15 pm

Students do not need to be in school uniform for this test, as they will only be in school for 15-20 minutes maximum.

Once your child has completed the self-administered test, they will return home with you or by themselves. The test does not hurt and previous tests have involved a simple swabbing of the tonsil area and also up one nostril. Staff will be on hand to explain this to them. A video of what this looks like can be found here: <https://twitter.com/educationgovuk/status/1409081631143518209?s=20>.

You will have the option of completing a straightforward form on your mobile device, which will then relay to you the result of the test. Any student who does test positive must follow the guidelines of the government and self-isolate for 10 days (at the time of writing and this is subject to change.) **We will only contact people who test positive and if you do not hear from us, then please take this to mean that all is fine.**

All Year 9 students who test negative will be able to then attend school for their first day at St Margaret Ward Catholic Academy on Friday 10 September 2021.

Arrangements for the first full days of school life

- All new Year 9 students must attend school from Friday 10 September 2021.
- All new Year 9 students should meet at the bottom of the metal staircase by the DT area by 8.30 am. The school day for all Year Groups starts at 8.40 am.
- Students should access this area of the school by walking down the main path of the school, walking in front of the school and around the left-hand side of the buildings. Students should gather at the bottom of the metal staircase that leads up to the DT Canopy area.
- All students are expected to be in full school uniform from this date onwards.
- Please see the school website for further information about uniform and also appropriate school shoes, which can be found here: <https://stmargaretward.co.uk/parents/uniform/>
- For the first day of school life, students will not need their PE kits.
- In a change back to normal practice, all students will wear their full school uniform everyday and then get changed into their PE kit for lessons and then back into their full uniform at the end of the lesson.
- It is important to note that all students ought to have a coat, preferably waterproof and with a hood, as we approach the Autumn weather. As a community, we do not allow students to wear hooded jackets (hoodies) and these will be confiscated on sight.

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- On Friday 10 September, all Year 9 students will take part in our bespoke 'Orientation' day, which will guide all of our community into 'how we do things' as members of our school.
- Your child will be given their own planner and also a copy of their timetable.
- We operate a two-week timetable and the following week, from Monday 13 September will be week 2 of the timetable.
- Please note that the school teaching day finishes for the whole community at 3.00 pm and students will be walked by their class teachers to the main exit points of the site.

Arrangements for break time and lunch times

- For the first few weeks of the Autumn term, we will be keeping our Year Groups separate at break and lunch times. This is so that we can ensure that if there are any positive cases of COVID that minimal numbers of students will be affected. We have received some guidance from the Government about what we need to do, but as I am sure you'll be aware, things may change quite rapidly.

If things change...

- We recognise that the Government may have to respond to any possible rise in cases and I would like to reassure you that as a community, we have plans in place to make rapid adjustments to school life.
- As always, we will keep you as informed as we can do. I would invite you to follow our social media presence in the following places:
 - Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/stmargaretward>
 - Twitter: <https://twitter.com/StMargaretWard>
 - Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/st_margaret_ward_catholic_acad/

If you have any questions about anything related to school, please do not hesitate to contact either Miss Lander (Head of Year 9 - vlender@smwca.org.uk) or Mrs Farrer (Assistant Principal – hfarrer@smwca.org.uk).

Finally, may I take this opportunity to wish you all a very safe, pleasant and well-earned summer break and we look forward to welcoming your child into their new year group in September 2021.

Live Jesus in Our Hearts...Forever.

Yours faithfully



Mr P Johnson
Vice Principal

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