



# ST MARGARET WARD CATHOLIC ACADEMY



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

01B/CovidUpdateJanuary2022/DM/LB

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4 January 2022

Dear Parent / Carer

## JANUARY 2022 - COVID UPDATE

A very warm welcome back to the start of a new year, I hope you had a good Christmas and would like to wish you all a very Happy New Year.

I am writing with some important updates that have been sent to schools over the past few days.

### 1) **An update to On Site Lateral Flow Testing**

We would strongly advise and encourage that all students take part in the testing arrangements that the school sent out before the Christmas break – available [here](#). The Government have asked all schools to ensure that as many students as possible do take a test on site before commencing face to face lessons. Students should now attend for a test despite having had Covid in the past 90 days as long as they are not currently still isolating. Students are expected to attend their lessons [online](#) until face to face lessons recommence later in the week when our testing cycle is complete.

### 2) **Face masks are now compulsory whilst inside the building and also within classrooms**

With immediate effect, the government has announced that face coverings should be worn (unless exempt) by all students at all times within the school buildings. This means that every student must supply their own appropriate face covering with effect from their return date to school. We will, of course, continue to hand out masks to those students who have genuinely forgotten their mask.

All schools have been assured that this is a temporary measure and this will be reviewed over the course of the next few weeks.

### 3) **Please remember, if you have any of the main symptoms of Covid (below) you must isolate and arrange to have a PCR test.**

It is most important that you **DO NOT** send children to school with these symptoms until a negative PCR result has been obtained or you have completed your isolation period.

- **a high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- **a new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- **a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste** – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.

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



#### 4) **If your child catches Covid-19**

Once your child has received a positive result (either through a LFT or PCR test) please contact the school and isolate. If the test was a LFT you should book a confirmatory PCR test immediately.

If it was through a PCR test, test and trace will guide you on the isolation period. New guidance states that on day 6 of the isolation you can do a LFT. If negative you need to do another LFT test 24 hrs later (day 7) If this test is also negative and they don't have a temperature your child can return to school on day 8. If either of the LFT tests were positive, you must continue to isolate for 10 full days and can return to school on the 11<sup>th</sup> day.

#### 5) **Someone in your household tests positive for Covid-19**

If someone in your child's household tests positive they must self-isolate and book a PCR test (even if your child is younger than 5). In addition, from the day you find out that there is a positive case your child, should carry out daily LFTs for 7 days. If the PCR test comes back negative and the LFT results are negative, then your child can return to school continuing to complete the full 7 days of LFTs. We are also asking that on day 4 or 5 you get a further PCR test.

Please continue to keep us informed of all symptoms and confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 through the following email address: [studentabsence@smwca.org.uk](mailto:studentabsence@smwca.org.uk).

#### 6) **Staffing**

As a school we are committed to offering face to face teaching and will do all we can to ensure this is the case. This may mean that we have to move some staff or classes around so we have enough staff to teach all classes in school. To keep all our classes open we must protect our staff as much as possible and so it is vital that all parents follow the guidance we have detailed above. If you need to speak to the staff, please email the school office who will pass messages on.

As always, may I thank you for your continued support in these times. Please stay safe and well over the course of this half-term.

Yours faithfully



Mr D McKenna  
**Principal**

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