



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
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Headteacher: Mr C Newstead



Friday 20th March, 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Following Wednesday's announcement by the Prime Minister that due to the growing number of students and staff who are not able to attend schools for reasons linked to COVID-19, we will be closing the school with effect from **Friday 20th March 2020**. We hope to be able to resume normal school operations as soon as possible however, it is entirely possible that this could be a long closure.

Hence from today, until further notice, pupils can no longer attend classes. The school has placed details of work that can be undertaken at home, on the school website. If appropriate, we will update these as more resources become available. If we do that we will inform you of that through text. It is therefore essential that you ensure your mobile phone details are up to date with the school. The school will contact you at regular intervals via the text service, by phone and the website to keep you informed as soon as we get more information.

We will be looking to assist families as best we can, and we are looking to work alongside the LA in the provision of assistance to the most vulnerable families. We will be providing a childcare facility, but only for the children of Key Workers and the vulnerable. Parents and carers of these children have been informed if there is a place for them next week. School meals will be served to those children.

If you have not been informed that there is a place for your child, your child should not attend school.

It is important to note that the Government have asked parents to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for those children who absolutely need to attend. Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be. The fewer children making the journey to school, and the fewer children in educational settings, the lower the risk that the virus can spread and infect vulnerable individuals in wider society.

Parents have been contacted to inform them that a place is available, however, should you wish your child to access childcare at school due to you being a keyworker/having a vulnerable child and you have not been informed that there is a place for your child, then please contact school. Please be advised that school will need to see evidence of your occupation to ensure that you fall into the key workers category. If you are unsure then government advice is to confirm with your employer that, based on their business continuity arrangements, their specific role is necessary for the continuation of this essential service.

More information for parents can be found on the following link:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

Please continue to follow government advice during the days/weeks ahead. And please find ways of staying in touch with your friends and family, even if you are required to self-isolate.

I know that for many families it will be a difficult time financially. The LA have undertaken the role of producing school dinners for those qualifying for Free School Meals. I am unsure at this time whether this includes free meals for all children in Reception class, Year 1 and Year 2.

If you need emergency food or support, local foodbanks are available. The location of local foodbanks are detailed on the website: <https://knowsley.foodbank.org.uk/>

We are all looking forward to a time when all members of the school community can get back to normal operations. For now though, we must all commit to doing the best that we can to look after ourselves and each other in these extremely unusual and challenging circumstances.

Thank you to all who have offered kind words of gratitude and support for our school community. I am blessed with a dedicated team of committed and hard-working people who are ensuring that all our children are well cared for and are given the best possible education. There will be challenging times ahead as the virus impacts on our family and friends. However, with your continued support, tolerance and understanding during this difficult period, our school family will weather the storm.

Yours Sincerely,

C. Newstead

C. Newstead

