



# ST MARY'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

a Catholic Voluntary Academy

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15 July 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

As the academic year draws to a close, I would like to share with you a number of points concerning St Mary's re-opening to all year groups from September.

Firstly, can I state how pleased I am that all of our pupils will be returning to school. During what has been a difficult and unsettling period in our history, the greatest challenge has been not having all of our pupils where they belong, here at St Mary's. Our pupils, and our relationships with them, are the guiding purpose for us all and I very much welcome the opportunity of re-establishing our community, in person, once again. I would also like to take this opportunity to wish; Mr Danks, Mrs Kirk and Mrs Clixby every happiness throughout their retirements and thank them for their service to St Mary's.

Re-instating the full curriculum and pastoral support for all year groups, whilst maintaining health and safety, are the absolute priorities and in order to achieve this, a number of amendments to the school's usual ways of operating, must be implemented.

The aim is to maintain as much distance between year groups as possible, in order to achieve individual year group 'bubbles'. We are fortunate that due to our unique campus - style layout of the buildings, with most classrooms having their own external entrances, we can ensure that lessons will still be taught in departmental and specialist rooms. To achieve this, we will be implementing a strict one-way system around school, and there will also be new routines regarding the entering of buildings, enabling all movement around the school to happen externally.

Our thorough hygiene and cleaning measures, already implemented during the school closure period, will continue alongside the investment in additional products that will make it safe for classrooms to be used by multiple year groups. To further bolster standards, over the summer holidays, all toilets for Years 7 – 11 are being comprehensively re-furnished and expanded, with each year group being allocated their own toilets. We are also installing external hand washing stations around the school site.

Whilst we can implement a range of measures, it is still incumbent upon pupils to take personal responsibility for social distancing and individual hygiene. All members of the St Mary's community must also adhere to the following, despite potential individual and parent/carer inconvenience, in order to keep our children and staff as safe as possible.

## Travel to and from school

- We are pleased that we have been instructed by Derbyshire County Council, to run our full school bus service in accordance with their guidance.
  - As all of our pupils are above the age of 11, it will be compulsory for pupils to wear a face mask if they are using the school bus as it is with public transport.
  - Pupils will have to sit in year group areas on the school bus.
  - The bus companies are introducing enhanced cleaning and hygiene procedures.
  - All pupils must sanitize their hands before boarding.
  - Upon arrival at school, pupils will be immediately directed to separate entrances for year groups before they may remove their mask.
  - Pupils who do not comply will not be allowed to use our bus service.
- Pupils in Y7 – Y11, not travelling on school buses, must not arrive in school before 8.35 am.
- Pupils arriving by car must not enter the school car parks or bus bay.
- Pupils arriving on foot must enter via the main school entrance.

***Live, Love and Learn in the Light of Christ***

- All year groups will be allocated a designated outdoor recreational area and must go to this area, or Learning Support for some pupils, on arrival at school.

### Uniform

- The Department for Education is advising schools to reinstate full uniform for September. Pupils will therefore return in full uniform in September. Girls can return in summer dresses or their usual uniform. Years 10 and 11 may wear flesh coloured tights or ankle socks, all other year groups will wear ankle socks. 28<sup>th</sup> September is the return to full winter uniform and navy blue tights.
- Pupils must come to school, on the days where they have PE, in their PE kit and school blazer. Navy jogging bottoms must be worn.

### Structure of the school day, school environment and facilities

- Please see attached for the new structure of the school day.
- There will be no breakfast club.
- Staggered breaks and lunchtimes, alongside the re-location of form period, will facilitate fewer pupils making contact outside of lessons.
- Year groups have been allocated school entrance and exit points, alongside designated recreational areas, in order to avoid year groups mixing.
- Caterlink will still provide food and drink at break and lunchtime but the range of food on offer will be more limited.
- Pupils will be issued with a contactless card linked to ParentPay, rather than the current biometric system in the dining room.
- We will not be having assemblies, in the first instance, when we re-open in September.

### Curriculum

- The full curriculum will be maintained for all year groups.
- Tutor time has been moved and period one will begin at 8.45am.
- Any extra funds received from the DFE will be utilised to provide additional tuition.
- We have invested in remote learning and trained all staff so that if certain pupils have to shield, or we experience a local lockdown, we will be able to offer a more interactive and personalised curriculum for pupils to follow. You will receive more detail of how to use the software in September.

### Pastoral Support

- Heads of Year and the school's well-being team will work with pupils to support them following the enforced period of absence from school.
- Miss Drury is the new Head of Key Stage 4 (Y10/Y11) and Miss Pimblett is the new Head of Key Stage 3 (Y7/8/9) and both will work with Heads of Year, in order to provide pastoral care for pupils.
- Mrs Cain has postponed her retirement until Christmas and Mr Breedon will also be in post, as Assistant Headteacher, in order to support the pastoral welfare of pupils.
- Our wellbeing team is leading the way with our 'best foot forward' approach, providing resources, guidance, strategies and advice for the whole school community to ensure that September is a positive and productive experience for our pupils.

Clearly, government guidance may change over the summer and I will write to you again before school re-starts in September, with further information. Thank you for your support over recent months, our values remain steadfast and our motivation to do the very best for your children, in an ever-changing context, is undiminished. Do enjoy what may be a different summer and I will remain in contact to update you of St Mary's plans, as the national guidelines evolve.

Yours faithfully



**Mrs M Dengate**  
**Headteacher**

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