St Joseph’s Catholic Primary School

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 Tuesday 17th March 2020

Dear Parents / Carers

As you are aware, the government’s guidance on the coronavirus has changed from the ‘contain’ phase to one of delaying the spread of the virus. We’re getting in touch to let you know what we’re doing in light of this, and what we expect from all of you, to help make sure our school community keeps safe and calm. We’d like to reassure you that at St Joseph’s we are taking all of the necessary steps to protect our community and are continuing to follow official guidance from the government, Public Health England and our Academy Trust.

**What’s the current situation?**

* The school remains open – this is the current official guidance we’ve been given.
* If you or anyone in your home has a **high temperature** or a **new and continuous cough**, then all those living in the home should stay at home for fourteen days.
* If staff members or children become unwell at school, with a new continuous cough or a high temperature, they will be sent home and will need to stay at home for fourteen days.

Although we have, like many other schools, some staff and children who are sensibly self-isolating, our school will remain open in accordance with the advice from Public Health England. However, it is still important that families and schools do all we can to protect each other and prevent transmission to others. To this end, we regret that for the time being:

* Friday’s Prayer and Praise assembly is not open to friends and family.
* Staff will no longer attend external training events.
* All but essential visitors to school have been postponed.
* External club providers have been postponed.
* The residential for Y6 will not go ahead next week.

We are continuing to take every opportunity to remind the children about good personal hygiene and we are encouraging the children to wash their hands at various key points during the school day. Staff have been signposted to various resources to use in lesson time to discuss the current situation.

Like all schools, we are also planning for a possible situation where we might need to close for a length of time. This is not because we have any plans to close, but because all schools need to prepare for this possibility. To that effect, we have made plans for the two main responses to this virus.

• Scenario 1:- A lack of teachers due to staff self-isolating

• Scenario 2: - Forced School closure by Public Heath England

**Closure due to Scenario 1: - A lack of teachers due to staff self-isolating**

If we reach a critical number of absent staff members that results in a decision to close partially or fully, parents / carers will be communicated with in the following way:

1. A Class Dojo/letter will be emailed to explain the situation and guide you to the school website for further information;

2. The school will display details about the closure on its website before 8am stating if any year groups, or other groups of pupils, will remain on site or not;

3. The school will provide work for pupils to complete.

**Closure due to Scenario 2: - Forced School closure by Public Heath England**

If the government closes all schools, St Joseph’s will:

• Email a Class Dojo and a letter to all parents / carers as soon as we are informed to give as much notice as possible. *Please make sure that the school has your most up to date email address*;

• Publish any additional information on our school website;

• Provide schoolwork for all year groups.

While closure remains a worst-case scenario, we wanted to reassure you that we are planning appropriately for this. In the meantime, we will remain fully open and will continue to follow the official guidance being issued to all schools. We respect the decision and circumstances of each family; however, we ask that you let the school office know if your child is not attending school.

We are very grateful for the continued support of all school staff, children, young people and families as we manage these difficult times. It is important that we continue to work together and support one another.

We will continue to keep you informed.

Yours sincerely

K A Dunne

Headteacher