

# St George & St Martin Catholic Academy

(Member of The Newman Catholic Collegiate)

Boulton Street, Birches Head,  
Stoke-on-Trent. ST1 2NQ.

Telephone No: 01782 234384

E-mail: [sgsmcp@sgsmnewman.co.uk](mailto:sgsmcp@sgsmnewman.co.uk)

[www.sgsmacademy.co.uk](http://www.sgsmacademy.co.uk)

Principal: Mrs. D. Farmer BA (Hons), MA, NPQH



'Growing, Learning and Loving; United in Play, Prayer and Peace'

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Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2020

Dear Parents,

I write today to update you on a few things:

## **Remote learning**

The children have spent the last week completing their learning on Microsoft Teams or Purple Mash (including Mini Mash). I'm sure you'll agree that they have been fantastic. Yes, we have had teething problems, but these have been sorted out quickly and children have been able to access their learning in almost the same way as if they were in the classroom. I would like to say a huge well done to our children (and families) for getting to grips so quickly with the new way of working.

It has been lovely to have overwhelmingly positive feedback from parents. We are doing all that we can as a school to ensure the children are continuing to make the great progress that they were making last term, and the best way for us to do that is through our live lessons. Our staff are working so hard to ensure that this happens, which I know many of you recognise. I want to say a big thank you to our staff, as this really wouldn't be possible if we had staff who were not fully supportive.

We are learning new things to do with Teams every day, and so we are changing things slightly as these new things start to come up. This week, we are looking at the children accessing their work through the Assignments section and then uploading their work for the teacher to mark. Again, I'm sure there will be teething problems but we will work through them together.

As with anything, please do not hesitate to contact school via e-mail or telephone if you are unsure of something or need any help, we will happily talk you through things.

I would like to remind family members who may sit with their child during the teaching that the child should be encouraged to use the 'Raise Hand' button if they have a question or use the Chat function. Please do not interrupt the lesson by asking questions throughout. The staff will get to you once they are able to. The staff always remain in the meetings to support the children and further questions can be asked there.

## **Staffing update**

Mrs Callan has decided not to return to school after Christmas. She has dedicated 23 years of her life to supporting children at St George and St Martin. We wish her lots of luck, and once the children return, we will arrange for a suitable gift and card for her. I want to thank Mrs Callan for all that she has done for our children over the last 23 years.

## **National assessments**

You may have seen at the end of last week that the DfE has announced that there will be no national assessments for children, including Key Stage 1 SATS, Key Stage 2 SATS and the Year 1 phonics check. Whilst this takes off additional pressure, we will still ensure that the children are at the correct level to be able to move on to the next stage of their learning.

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## Children of critical workers

I am kindly requesting that you only take a place in school for your child if it is absolutely necessary. The Government have sent a clear message that you should Stay at Home. This is also the case for children and whenever they can stay at home, they should do so. Please only book places at school when it is absolutely necessary.

**The Government have said, "The national restrictions mean all children that can stay at home should stay at home."**

## Social distancing

If your child is attending school, please ensure you are following the 2m social distancing rule when you are dropping your child off or collecting. There are some parents who are not maintaining that 2m.

As I'm sure you are aware, 1 in 3 cases are asymptomatic, and so we are being advised to behave as though we have the virus. Currently the case rate around school is 468 per 100,000, which is above the overall rate for Stoke-on-Trent. We all need to do our best to reduce the spread of the virus to ensure that our NHS and local hospital is not overwhelmed. If you are less than 2m away from other people, if they test positive you will have to self-isolate as a close contact.

As always, if you require further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

*Mrs Farmer*

Principal