



Learning and Growing Together
in Faith and Friendship

St Joseph's Catholic Academy

Member of the Newman Catholic Collegiate

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Principal- Mrs L Hamilton

Tuesday 23rd February 2021

Dear Parents

Following the Prime Minister's announcement last night, I am delighted to inform you that our school will be open to all pupils from Monday 8th March. Until that point, I must remind you that the school is closed. Only children who have been accepted as children of Critical Workers or those classed as vulnerable may attend. We are not able to accept any further requests for places during the next 2 weeks.

I appreciate that some parents may be anxious about their child's return to school; anxiety in these unprecedented times is completely understandable and, as parents, our first priority is to keep our families safe. However, attending school is the very best thing for children's wellbeing and learning and, for this reason, the government has clearly stated that attendance at school is not optional. Please be assured that we will continue to do all that we can to keep our community safe. If you do have particular concerns over your child's return to school, I urge you to contact me at school this week so that we can discuss these.

Over the next 2 weeks we will be working hard to prepare for the return of all children. It is going to be most important that you read the letters and guidance that we send so the return can go as smoothly as possible. Our number one priority will be ensuring our school is safe and so I urge you to ensure you continue to follow the national guidance both in and out of school in addition to the guidance we will send out to you. As before, everyone above primary school age will be expected to wear a face covering while on school grounds. In addition, everyone will be expected to maintain social distancing. Please remind your children about this when coming to school. It is most important that parents do not congregate in groups in or around school.

Again, we will need to have a staggered start to the school day. This is to enable us to maintain social distancing. As soon as we have confirmed these times we will write to you. I kindly ask that you stick to these times and do not arrive early or late. Unfortunately, this will mean some siblings will have to enter the school at different times. Whilst we will try to keep these wait times to a minimum, this unavoidable if we are to maintain social distancing. The one way system will remain in place and it is essential that all families follow this. An extra few steps walk may well be a nuisance in the rush of school drop off but I am sure you will agree that this irritation is well worth the benefits to everyone's safety.

Our before and after school care club will be open as normal but numbers will be strictly limited. Please ensure you book and pay for places well in advance via your online SCOPay account. Once we have reached our limit we will not be able to accept any other children. We are accepting bookings for the 8th March onwards now.

Children should return to school in their full school uniform. Please ensure that your child has sufficient school uniform which fits them including school shoes so that they are able to return looking smart and ready to learn.



I am praying that we do not have to close our school again and so urge you to play your part and ensure you follow all the guidelines set out by Government. Over the next few weeks we will be writing to you with further information about our reopening.

I am so happy we will be able to come together as a Catholic School community during Lent, a time of solemnity and self-reflection.

I sincerely thank you for all your support and once again ask for your patience during this most difficult of times.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "L. Hamilton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mrs L Hamilton
Principal