



Learning and Growing Together  
in Faith and Friendship

## St Joseph's Catholic Academy

Member of the Newman Catholic Collegiate

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Acting Executive Principal- Mrs D Farmer

Acting Head of School – Mrs R Wilson

Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Dear Parents,

I am writing to thank you all for your amazing support this term. Whilst this last year has not been the easiest, it has been an absolute pleasure and privilege to lead this school community for the last year. You and your children welcomed me into your school, and I feel very sad that today I will be leaving you.

We have all worked so hard to keep our school community safe. Amazingly, we have very, very few cases of Covid in school, which is a tribute to everyone ensuring that our risk assessment is fully followed.

I would especially like to thank all the staff at our school. They have been truly remarkable in ensuring that your child has the best possible education. Many staff have not had breaks and when in school have supported your children all of the time. This term has been a term like no other and has required an enormous amount of energy, commitment and dedication from the whole staff. I don't think school staff have been given enough credit for their work during this pandemic, particularly in the media. I would personally like to thank Mrs Wilson, who has done an amazing job as Acting Head of School. She has been a great support to me and has worked so hard to support all of our children, staff and families.

We may not always get things right; we are working with ever changing guidance and the advice we are given can change daily, so we know things are not always ideal. However, I can promise you that our staff have always done their very best under the circumstances to provide the best and safest education we can for your child and we are proud of what we have been able to achieve this term.

As for the children; we have been so impressed with the way they have adapted to the changes we have had to make. The children have been exceptional since the whole school returned in September. They are polite, respectful and supportive of staff and they have settled down to work hard immediately. With hard work and effort, they have all started to catch up on lost learning and we will get back to where they need to be; they are doing so well to get there.

As we now approach the Christmas holiday I must ask for your continued support and vigilance. Please do all you can to follow the Tier 3 guidance for Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire to limit contact and maintain social distancing.

Please speak to your child about limiting their contacts outside of school; there should be no mixing of households indoors or most outdoor places. The 'Hands, Face, Space' guidance still applies and should be followed carefully and if you have any suspicion that your son or daughter may be feeling unwell, please keep them at home. If they have a high temperature, a new, continuous cough and/or a loss of, or change to, their sense of smell or taste they must have a test and the household should isolate at least until the result of the test is known. If they test positive they, and the household, must continue to isolate and the child must not come into school for at least 10 days and until they are no longer displaying any of the below;

- a high temperature or feeling hot and shivery
- a runny nose or sneezing
- feeling or being sick
- diarrhoea



Only stop self-isolating when these symptoms have gone. If you have diarrhoea or you're being sick, stay at home until 48 hours after they've stopped.

Locally it now says that, if a person has the following symptoms, a lateral flow test should be arranged. They can attend school but only if they are well enough to do so and only need to self-isolate if the test comes back positive:

- Headaches
- Aches and pains
- Feeling very tired for no good reason
- Sore throat
- Runny nose
- Sneezing
- Sometime 'tummy ache' in children

If your child develops symptoms of Covid before Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December and the test returns positive before Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> December, please email the school at [stjoseph@sjnewman.co.uk](mailto:stjoseph@sjnewman.co.uk). If you get a positive test result on or after 24<sup>th</sup> December, you do not need to report this to school until we return on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January.

Christmas is the time for connecting with family near and far. I hope you spend some time to pray and remember the true meaning of Christmas. May the Christmas season fill your home with joy, your heart with love and your life with laughter. Wishing you a very Merry Christmas and our staff look forward to seeing you in 2021.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs D Farmer  
Acting Executive Principal