

19th May 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I hope that you and your family are all well. The changes within education are taking place rapidly as I am sure you have noticed. **Last week's announcement in conjunction with follow-up guidance means that St George Catholic College anticipates offering face to face teaching for Year 10 students from Tuesday 9th June while maintaining strict guidelines around social distancing in a gradual approach, as set out below.** In addition to this, the school will continue offering its emergency service to children of key workers and vulnerable pupils. I apologise that a large part of my letter is directed at Year 10 but we just felt as a parent of any pupil you may wish to know what is going on.

Year 10 Face-to-Face Teaching – From Tuesday 9th June 2020

We realise parents and students are going to be anxious and concerned about returning to school in light of the COVID 19 crisis. Guidance released by the Government for parents and carers can be found by clicking on the two links below if you would like more information. At the end of this letter we have outlined what the guidance says and what St George has done to address the issue to reassure you. Although the guidance suggests from Monday 1st June, we want to make sure everything is in place to ensure we comply with the social distancing measures and to be able to assess the impact of the partial lifting of the lockdown from 12th May as this will not be reviewed until the 28th May. There is so much information/misinformation out there. It is essential we are well prepared and you have had time to understand the approach we are taking. The safety of our students and staff comes first.

Therefore, our priority is still our home learning package through MS Teams and we will maintain that for all our Year 7-10 pupils. The face to face support will be from specialist teachers in Maths, English, Science & RE and will supplement the home learning. Phase 1 from Tuesday 9th June, we will allow students to re-integrate safely back into school ensuring social distancing measures are in place and students feel safe and well supported. We will allow only half of Year 10 in on Tuesday 9th June split into 6 classes of 12 students and the other half on Wednesday 10th June. Phase 2 from Monday 15th June each half of the year group will be in school for two days each week receiving face-to-face lessons in the subjects previously mentioned. Your son/daughter will be in either Band A or Band B which I will write to you this week confirming which band your son/daughter is in. **Students would be expected to attend in normal school uniform. Food is available as normal but students are more than welcome to bring a packed lunch.**

Phase 1: W/C Monday 8th June

Tuesday 9th June 2020 – Band B from **10-12pm**

This will include a session on ensuring the students feel safe in the school environment, addressing any concerns and setting out the rules around social distancing. The second session will be either a Maths or Science lesson.

Wednesday 10th June 2020 – Band A from **10-12pm**

This will include a session on ensuring the students feel safe in the school environment, addressing any concerns and setting out the rules around social distancing. The second session will be either an RE or English lesson.

Phase 2: W/C Monday 15th June 2020

Band A – Monday 15th June & Wednesday 17th June **10am-2:30pm**

Band B – Tuesday 16th June & Thursday 18th June **10am-2:30pm**

From phase 2 students in Year 10 will be in two days a week. For the rest of the week, the expectation is that pupils would be on MS Teams following their normal timetables. On the two days the students are in, they will attend a Maths, English, Science & RE or BTEC Health & Social Care lesson to supplement home learning. If phase 2 works well we will continue it until the end of the summer term.

The school has been deep cleaned and these areas will continue to be deep cleaned every day with students expected to wash their hands a number of times during the day. We have chosen classrooms that are big enough to meet the social distancing requirements and all have separate entrances to go outside. I will be writing to all Year 10 students this week confirming what band and therefore what days you can come in.

You may ask about face-to-face time for option subjects but I am afraid it is not possible to provide this without breaking social distancing rules and changing the make up of classes. Unfortunately, students' options are so personalised we cannot match up a class with similar students who have the same three options consistently. Guidance and support for option subjects will remain on MS Teams as normal following your timetabled lessons.

School Transport – Year 10

Due to the guidance on social distancing we cannot safely offer our school bus service. Therefore, please can I ask that students in Year 10 either arrive by car, bike, walk or use public transport as a last resort. Our minibus service is still working however all the buses are now full as they have been prioritised for key worker children and to meet social distancing requirements.

Arrival, Departures, Uniform

On arrival students will be required to maintain the 2 metre social distancing guideline which will be marked out and supervised by staff. The drive way to school will be closed and we will be allowing one car in at a time to drop off their son/daughter. This will be supervised from 9:30-10:05am and from 2:20pm till all Year 10 pupils are safely off site. For departures, classes will not be dismissed all at once but over a short period of time to ensure every student leaves the school site safely. We would, as a precaution, advise uniform is washed on a daily basis for the two days your son/daughter is in therefore students do not need to wear a school tie. As a reminder it is summer uniform.

Anxious Return

We understand that pupils will be anxious about returning and so we will spend some time reassuring the students what we have put in place to protect everyone's health and to familiarise ourselves with the environment, the expectation, routine and discuss any concerns. Students and staff may well have lost loved ones during this tragic time and we are conscious of this. Our priority is to ensure pupils feel safe and happy back at St George. Our mental health nurse will be in both days on the first week back as well as our inclusion team to offer additional support to students.

Guidance for parents and carers

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>

Years 7-9

It now appears that unfortunately our Year 7-9 pupils will not be returning to school before September. This is so sad as we do miss you all and I know on behalf of all our teaching staff we just want to get back to teaching. Therefore, we must continue to work via MS Teams and we would continue to be available online for your lessons. There may be some lessons in the week that may clash with a Year 10 lesson for a teacher but we believe this is minimised to avoid any disruption. It has been noticed how hard you are working and we really appreciate it and are impressed by the work you are doing.

Year 8 & 9 options – I have written today to all students in Years 8 and 9 confirming your son/daughter's options for September. Therefore, from after half term students do not need to attend lessons on MS Teams or complete the work sent by email for the subject they have dropped or if you are in Year 8 going into Year 9 the subjects you will no longer be studying next year.

Tutor Phone Calls & Awards

In conjunction with this, your tutor will continue to call you every two weeks in order to offer support where you may need it. The next intended week for us to call is week beginning Monday 1st June. If you have any questions, please get in touch and keep sending in the outstanding work you have all been doing. Teachers will still be nominating awards for each subject at the end of this term which if we cannot meet we will be sending out by post the certificates and rewards.

Mental Health & Wellbeing

The coronavirus crisis is having a huge impact on young people. The loss of routine, and exam cancellations are all factors that are causing stress and increased anxiety, as well as additional health concerns. For teenagers, this can be a really challenging time and we are here to support you all. Please click on the link below for expert advice and guidance to get you through this challenging time. **There are quarantine activities now on the following page to help cope with the additional stress you may be feeling at the moment.**

<https://www.stgcc.co.uk/page/?title=Student+Help+and+Advice&pid=233>

Safeguarding - Pupils

staysafe@stgcc.co.uk

This email address is available **only for pupils** if you are feeling concerned for your safety, wellbeing or anxiety which is affecting your ability to function as you normally would. This will be looked at daily. For parents, the email address will be emailed to all students via their school email accounts.

Year 11 Leavers Assembly – Postponed to Thursday 12th November 2020 - 7pm

Our Year 11 leavers' assembly arranged for Friday 10th July has been cancelled. We are so sorry to do this but the guidance has not changed around large gatherings and social distancing. If not all students are being advised that they can return to school, then it is not safe. We feel it is now sensible to incorporate the leavers' assembly in with our **Year 11 Leavers' Presentation evening on Thursday 12th November at 7pm**. Hoodies will be available from school on GCSE Results Day in August. Mr Liston will be sending out in the post a small gift to you all that we have been unable to give you in person the week beginning Monday 1st June.

Year 10 Risk Assessment: Synopsis:

We will ask secondary schools, to offer some face-to-face support to supplement the remote education of Year 10 students who are due to take key exams next year, alongside the full time provision they are offering to priority groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Remote learning provision will continue✓ Face to face support supplements, and does not replace, remote learning
This will not be a return to full timetables or pupils back in school or college full time, rather some support to supplement pupils' remote education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Only English, Maths, Science and RE to be scheduled for face to face support at this stage
<p>Class or group sizes</p> <p>We know that, unlike older children and adults, early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff. In deciding to bring more children back to early years and schools, we are taking this into account. Schools should therefore work through the hierarchy of measures set out above:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• avoiding contact with anyone with symptoms• frequent hand cleaning and good respiratory hygiene practices• regular cleaning of settings• minimising contact and mixing <p>It is still important to reduce contact between people as much as possible, and we can achieve that and reduce transmission risk by ensuring children, young people and staff where possible, only mix in a small, consistent group and that small groups stay away from other people and groups.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Students will be in groups of 12✓ Each day they are in school, they will be in the same group with the same other students✓ This means it is only possible to offer face to face support for common curriculum areas (English, Maths, Science and RE)✓ Students will remain in these groups, without mixing, for all lessons and during lunch break✓ Each group will use the same classroom each day, and students will have allocated positions pre-marked for them to sit and stay at✓ Classrooms have been chosen that are large enough to socially distance, and that have their own entrances to avoid corridor use by different groups

<p>Children will need to stay within their new class/group wherever possible and we will ask settings to implement a range of protective measures including increased cleaning, reducing 'pinch points' (such as parents dropping children off at the start and end of day), and utilising outdoor space.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Students will wash hands when they arrive to school, before and after lunch, and as they leave school ✓ Students will assemble in their classrooms as soon as they arrive on site, rather than socialise in shared areas ✓ Classrooms and other areas used by students will be sanitised daily
<p>Schools and colleges should also ensure that the use of public transport for travel to and from school/college is minimised, especially at peak times.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Start time made later and end time brought earlier to move away from peak travel times ✓ Parents will be advised to avoid use of public transport where possible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • children, young people and staff who have been classed as clinically extremely vulnerable due to pre-existing medical conditions have been advised to shield. We do not expect people in this category to be attending school or college, and they should continue to be supported to learn or work at home as much as possible. Clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable) people are those considered to be at a higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus. Few, if any, children will fall into this category, but parents should follow medical advice if their child is in this category. Staff in this category should work from home where possible, and refer to the detail in our protective measures guidance • a child/young person or a member of staff who lives with someone who is clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable), including those who are pregnant, can attend their education or childcare setting • if a child/young person or staff member lives in a household with someone who is extremely clinically vulnerable, as set out in the guidance on shielding, it is advised they only attend an education or childcare setting if stringent social distancing can be adhered to and, in the case of children, if they are able to understand and follow those instructions. This may not be possible for very young children and older children without the capacity to adhere to the instructions on social distancing. If stringent social distancing cannot be adhered to, we do not expect those individuals to attend. They should be supported to learn or work at home • staff and children or young people should not attend if they have symptoms or are self-isolating due to symptoms in their household • protective measures will be put in place for staff and pupils, as far as is possible, to ensure that the risk of transmission is reduced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Parents told guidelines and asked to keep relevant students away from school ✓ Staff and students will be reminded that if they display any symptoms they should not only stay away from school while self-isolating, but are eligible for and should where possible take a test to establish whether they are positive or not

Finally, please stay safe, follow the guidance by the Government, and look after each other. We will continue to keep in touch.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J Habberley'.

Mr J Habberley
Head Teacher