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19th March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

RE: School Closure

Thank you for your ongoing patience and understanding during these unique and challenging times. Your support is greatly appreciated. As a school, the health, safety and wellbeing of our pupils and staff is very important and, as such, we are following government advice and taking their position on social distancing seriously.

Up to date government guidance states that anyone with Coronavirus symptoms (fever, persistent cough, shortness of breath) including their family members should self-isolate for 14 days and that those who are at increased risk of severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19) are to be particularly stringent in following social distancing measures (see weblink below):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

This group includes those who are pregnant, those who have an underlying health condition and those who are over the age of 70 (see weblink below):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults>

From this updated advice, the school is now experiencing a significantly reduced staffing level and does not have the required number of staff to ensure the safety of our pupils and staff. It has therefore been decided, in consultation with school governors, that it is necessary to close St Mary Magdalen's Primary School, from today (19.03.20), from a health and safety perspective. We will continue to review the situation and provide regular updates onto our school website and app systems.

Your child's class teacher has prepared a work pack for your child to complete at home. These include a combination of paper based and online curriculum resources and activities. Further guidance and teacher instructions are included within each pack. It is important that your child fully understands that the school closure is not a holiday and that they should try and meet our expectations to complete the work set, whilst fully acknowledging that these are unprecedented times we all face.





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Class teachers will do all that they can to ensure that educational resources will be provided to children and their families for a home schooling type programme during the school closure period, if it continues for a longer than anticipated time.

We are aware that school is a source of a guaranteed meal for some of our children. If your family is likely to experience difficulties regarding meals, due to this school closure, please contact the school for further advice and support. We are currently working on plans as to how the school can provide families, entitled to free school meals, with a daily lunch each day. This will be communicated in due course.

Following government advice, school will be open from Monday 23rd March (9:00am – 3:30pm) only for children of families who are classed as being front line services (NHS, Police, Armed Forces). We are waiting further clarification from the DfE and will contact you if you fall into this category.

Vulnerable children (pupils with an EHCP or assigned social worker) will also be entitled to attend school from Monday 23rd March. Our school website will be updated with key government guidance information as and when it is released.

Making the decision to close the school is never taken lightly and I appreciate that doing so may cause some anxiety for parents. However, the health and safety of our pupils and staff is paramount and I am confident that by working in partnership between home and school, our children's education will be given every opportunity to continue in a format that provides the best and safest environment for pupils, staff and parents during this challenging time, until schooling can return to normal at some point in the future.

Your sincerely,

Mr. L. J. Duncan (Headteacher)

Mr. L. Kerrigan (Chair of Governors)

