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Tuesday 5th January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

Following the late announcement from the Government last night, regarding Tier 4 restrictions and the necessary measures needed to limit the spread of the new variant strain of coronavirus, I regret to inform you that our school will now remain closed for the majority of pupils. For safety reasons, schools within Tier 4, which we are part of, have been directed by the Government to close and only remain open to pupils who are deemed vulnerable, have an Education Health and Care Plan or whose parents are identified as COVID critical workers (formerly known as Key Workers). All other pupils will be offered remote learning via our school website and Microsoft Teams. Further details regarding our remote learning package have been attached.

I appreciate that this recent announcement will be disappointing and frustrating for many, especially following the previous disruption to our children's schooling caused by this pandemic. However, the Prime Minister has confirmed that primary school aged children are vectors of transmission for this new strain of coronavirus and it really is essential, at this time, that we all do what we can to help limit its possible spread and reduce its long term impact on our school. **If your child is able to be looked after at home, then they should remain at home for this temporary school closure.** This will limit the possible transmission of coronavirus, especially by those who are asymptomatic and it will help to protect all of our children, staff and the most vulnerable adults within our school community.

In order to plan effectively for both staffing and remote learning, during the school closure period, I would like to collect further information from you. Please could you complete and return the google doc forms below (links provided) as soon as possible. If you are a COVID-19 critical worker and would like your child to attend school, you must complete the relevant form and return this prior to your child attending school. (The critical worker list can be found on the www.gov.uk website)

Link 1 - Critical Worker Form Link: <https://forms.gle/XearZiWyzebvd1b6>

Link 2 - IT Equipment Form: <https://forms.gle/hsishjqxLN7oniBa8>



We will endeavor to accommodate as many 'critical worker' pupils as possible, however, this will be limited and subject to a number of factors such as; health and safety, social distancing, staffing and resources. We therefore may not be able to guarantee an allocated school place for all 'critical worker' pupils. Due to the complexities of organising 'bubble grouping' within school and delivering effective online learning to all other pupils, during the temporary school closure, we cannot guarantee that your child will be taught by their usual class teacher, either within school or online. Critical worker pupils who attend school must wear their full school winter uniform.

Can I stress that all pupils, whether in school or learning remotely, will cover the same age related learning content and receive daily contact with a teacher throughout this period. The school will be working extremely hard to ensure that pupils who are learning at home are not disadvantaged in any way compared to pupils attending school.

School opening and closing times: School opening times will remain unchanged. School gates will be open from 8:40am with registration at 9am. These are outlined below:

EYFS: 9am – 3:10pm KS1: 9am – 3:15pm

LKS2: 9am – 3:20pm UKS2: 9am-3:30pm

(Breakfast Club, Tea Time Club and all other after school clubs will not run this half term.)

School Lunches and Free School Meal Entitlement

School lunches will be provided. This may take the form of a packed lunch but further information will be provided once final numbers are confirmed. Pupils entitled for Free School Meals will be provided with a lunch in school. The school office will contact parents of home learning pupils, entitled to free school meals, to discuss the government Care Package announced today.

I appreciate that this will be a worrying, challenging and, at times, stressful period for you as a parent as it is for all our staff here at St Mary Magdalen's. The necessary decision to close schools is one that we all hoped could be avoided. However, I am confident that by supporting each other over the coming weeks we can overcome this temporary disruption and hopefully resume some much needed normality.

As you know things are changing on a daily basis so I will continue to keep you updated as soon as I receive further information and guidance.

Thank you once again for your continued support. Take care.

Yours sincerely,



Mr. L.J. Duncan

