

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School



HEAD TEACHER: MRS. A. D. THORPE

CHAIR OF GOVERNORS: MRS. C. HORSLEY

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19th March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Re: Coronavirus update – school closure for most pupils

Following on from yesterday's update, I'm now writing to let you know that **we have now been instructed to close the school for the majority of our pupils after this Friday 20th March until further notice.**

We are currently waiting for the government to publish more information regarding their intention to provide for children of key workers (e.g. NHS staff, police, others in frontline services yet to be fully defined by the Government) and children with certain vulnerabilities. I will be in touch again tomorrow as soon as we are sure who this does apply to. An initial fact-finding questionnaire has been sent out tonight and we would appreciate it if you could complete it and return it to school by tomorrow morning to help us identify Key Workers.

We ask that you DO NOT send your child into school from Monday 23rd March onwards unless you have registered with us as the child of a key worker or a vulnerable child.

Please note that this is a national closure – as you may have heard in the news – so while it is a challenging situation, we are not alone. We'll re-open fully as soon as we can and will let you know when this is by text message. *Please ensure that your contact details are up to date.*

What we'll continue doing while your child is at home

Your child's learning is of course very important to us, so we'll continue to help your child to learn.

- All children have been provided with packs of home learning along with guidance from their teachers about what is expected.
- Children have access to our online platforms: Oxford Reading Buddy, TT Rockstars and various other free online resources. We ask that you encourage your child to use these so that their learning continues.
- Children are also encouraged to undertake a variety of home projects, ideas of which have been suggested in their learning packs - this can take whatever form they wish; a daily diary, video diary, science/history/geography project, art/design project etc.

Free School Meals

If your child usually receives free school meals, we will also be in touch with you individually with more information about how we could continue to provide this, with support from a scheme that the government announced last night, but it is as yet not up and running.



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Cancellation of trips and refunds

We are in the process of cancelling all of our trips for the foreseeable future. As we are able, we will arrange refunds to yourselves via the Parentpay system. As you can imagine this is a huge task and will take some time, so we ask you to be patient with us.

Keeping in touch

During the closure, we will post updates on the school website and we will also use our text messaging service to share any important announcements. The individual class updates on school work will be provided on the school website <http://www.stanley-pri.durham.sch.uk/our-classes/>. Currently, teachers and technicians are working behind the scenes to set up this communication tool which teachers, will use to update parents and children on what work they should complete. They will offer support and guidance, such as alerting parents to new educational packages as they become available free of charge. Staff will update the website by 10am on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday morning. As this is unprecedented and has not yet been trialed there maybe the odd glitch and we ask that you bear with us as we try our very best to make this work for everyone.

There are of course all the telephone numbers included in yesterday's letter which will enable you access help at any point during this unprecedented time.

This is as much as we know right now and we appreciate your continued patience as we deal with this ever-changing situation. We understand that this latest news will have an impact on you and your family and it is far from ideal, but we shall continue to keep in touch with any updates as the situation develops. We are in uncertain times but we will come through this and, as a school community, we will be here to support each other, whatever the future holds.

Thank you again for your continued support, we will be in touch with more information when we can.

Yours sincerely,

A D Thorpe

Mrs A D Thorpe
Headteacher

