

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School



HEAD TEACHER: MRS. A. D. THORPE

CHAIR OF GOVERNORS: MRS. C. HORSLEY

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20th March 2020

Dear parents/carers,

As a whole country we have been asked to socially distance and reduce ANY unnecessary contact with others. School closure is a vital part of this plan if we are to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus. You will be aware that the Government has released guidelines regarding provision for children of key workers during the Covid-19 crisis. Please note that the guidance states:

That parents keep their children at home, **wherever possible**, and has asked schools to remain partially open for those children that **absolutely need to attend...every child who can be cared for at home, should be.**

Therefore, if a parent is in the key worker category but can arrange safe childcare they should do this. If children stay at home, they limit the chance of spreading the virus. We need to limit the number of children coming into school to the bare minimum. In order to fulfil the Government aim of reducing the spread of the virus, whilst also supporting families **critical** to the Covid-19 response, school will run from Monday using a 'skeleton staff' for the children of these identified Key worker families **only**. As head teacher, I am also responsible for the health and safety of my staff so school will be providing 'child-care' arrangements only for those key-workers children who cannot work without said provision.

Please remember the purpose of school closure is about stopping unnecessary contact and therefore slowing down the spread of the virus. **If it is at all possible that a child can be at home, then they should be. This is an unprecedented situation and we must all play our part, however inconvenient or challenging it may be.**

Parents of children who have been allocated a place have all been spoken today. Please could those children attend school in their school uniform and bring their learning packs to work on. Please **do not** bring your child to school on Monday unless you have been contacted today by Mrs Thorpe, Mr Haveron or Mrs Ashby by telephone this afternoon.

Learning packs were sent home with all children yesterday and as previously discussed the website will be updated on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday morning by 10am. For any child who has not been in school this week a pack has been hand delivered today by school staff to their home.



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Moving forward, we are still awaiting information from the government about how to best support our families who access Free School Meals and as I have more information I will contact you directly next week.

Please let the office or myself know if you are a family in need and we will do our best to support you to access the most appropriate support network. We will continue to communicate with our whole school community through the website and where appropriate through our school texting service. There are also some telephone numbers below to access further support, as necessary.

Contact telephone numbers:

The following telephone numbers are also important:

- First Contact Safeguarding concerns to report children in danger or causing real concern: **03000 267 979**
- If you feel in need of extra support and would benefit from some Early help or family support please contact One Point on: **03000 261 111**

There are a wide number of charities both local and national which are also able to provide help and support:

- PACT House, Stanley 39 Front Street DH90ST Stanley, Durham, United Kingdom Tel: 07598 034763
- Stanley Food Bank – The Venue Stanley Day Centre, Wear Rd, Stanley DH9 6LU Tel: 01207 233512

The Staff, Governors and I appreciate all of your continued support through what is a difficult and challenging time. We are keeping our whole community in our prayers and we hope that this enforced absence will be as short as possible, meanwhile may God Bless all of you and your families.

Yours sincerely,

A D Thorpe

Mrs A D Thorpe
Headteacher

