



# St Mary's Catholic School

Benton Park Road, Newcastle upon Tyne. NE7 7PE

*where everyone can succeed*



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Dear Parents and Carers

Hope you and your family are safe and well.

## Further positive COVID-19 cases

For your information, since I wrote to you last Monday, there have been 6 further positive student cases of COVID-19. This has included one student in Year 7, four students in Year 11 and one student in Year 12. At present, Newcastle Public Health guidance continues to be that only close contacts identified, as below, should be sent home from school. However, should this advice change at any point, we will be in touch. Please be reassured, as always, that we have followed all government and Public Health guidance and protocols fully.

As a result, we are confident that we have identified all students who may have come into close contact with the confirmed cases during the 48 hours before the symptoms started, as per Public Health advice. The parents/carers of these students were contacted immediately and all of these students were sent home from school to self-isolate. They will complete a 14 day self-isolation period from the date of their last possible contact with the confirmed case, as per government guidance. Of course, the names of the students who have tested positive for COVID-19 must remain confidential.

All other students should therefore continue to attend school as normal unless, as outlined in my previous letters:

- They develop symptoms of COVID-19 (a new continuous cough, high temperature and/or a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell)
- Someone in their household develops symptoms or has tested positive for COVID-19
- They have been advised to isolate by the NHS Test and Trace process

We will continue to inform parents immediately if their child has been identified as a possible close contact to a positive case. We will also continue to update all parents regularly regarding any further positive cases in school.

**As I am sure you will know from the News and other media, the Newcastle area is unfortunately experiencing one of the highest rates of positive COVID-19 cases in the country at present. Therefore, it is perhaps not surprising that all schools in Newcastle are dealing with regular confirmed positive cases at this time. However, Newcastle Public Health have assured us that, at St Mary's, our health and safety protocols are excellent and we are doing everything we possibly can in school. Newcastle Public Health have also assured us repeatedly and with certainty that all positive cases so far in school are due to community transmission in their view, rather than transmission within the school. Therefore, please be reassured that we will continue to embed our robust and effective Health and Safety measures in school.**

A reminder that if your child develops any symptoms of COVID-19, they should remain at home and arrangements should be made for him/her to be tested. At that time, all other household members must also stay at home, not go to work, school or public areas, even for exercise. If your child does develop the above symptoms, they must remain at home until a negative test for COVID-19 is received. Please let the school know immediately should your child test positive for COVID-19. Further information and support is available at [nhs.uk/coronavirus](https://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus).

Thank you for your ongoing support and many best wishes.

Yours faithfully,

Miss Patterson  
Headteacher