



St Mary's Catholic School

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where everyone can succeed



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13th November 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope that you and your family are well.

Since I wrote to you on Wednesday 4th November, there have been 4 further positive student cases of COVID-19 at St Mary's. This includes one student in Year 9, one student in Year 10, one student in Year 11 and one student in Year 12. One member of staff has also tested positive.

As always, we have followed all Public Health guidance and protocols fully and we continue to liaise with Newcastle Public Health on a very regular basis to ensure our follow-up and health and safety measures are robust and effective. 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 for 14 days, as per the guidance.

For your information, in several student positive cases recently, a significant number of the close contacts identified, who then had to self-isolate at home, have been students who were a close contact to the positive case during social time, rather than in lessons. This includes being a close contact on the journey to and from school, on public transport and during breaks or lunchtimes in school. We would therefore appreciate if you could continue to remind your child about the importance of social distancing, including on the journey to and from school and on public transport. If he/she maintains a 2 metres social distance from friends and others at these times, as far as possible, this will help to keep your child safe and also reduce his/her chance of being identified as a close contact, should a positive case be confirmed in his/her friendship group.

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

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. Please let the school know immediately should your child test positive for COVID-19.

We will continue to update all parents regularly regarding any further positive cases in school.

Many best wishes and have a lovely weekend.

Yours faithfully,

Miss Patterson
Headteacher