



St Mary's Catholic School

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where everyone can succeed



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11th December 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope you and your families are safe and well.

Thank you for your continued support and I hope that the rota of in-school teaching and remote learning is working well. I also wanted to let you know some details about the end of term.

School closes on **Friday 18th December** for Christmas. On that day, students will be dismissed by 2.00pm, as has been our practice for many years, to help ensure a smooth end to the last day of term. Given the current situation, we have lengthened the staggered end to the day to support excellent social distancing and a calm end to the term. Therefore, year groups will be dismissed from school at the following times:

- Year 7 will leave school at 12.15pm
- Year 9 will leave school at 1.40pm
- Year 11 will leave school at 2.00pm
- Year 13 will leave following their last lesson in the morning, by 12.15pm at the latest

Years 8, 10 and 12 are completing remote learning at home on Friday 18th December.

As usual, the students have worked really hard over the last term and have made great progress, despite the significant challenges that everyone has faced due to the pandemic. If your child is in Years 9-13, in January you will receive a summary about your child's academic progress over the last term. Parents of students in Years 7 and 8 will receive this update on their child's progress at February half-term.

A reminder that if your child develops any symptoms of COVID-19 over the next week, they should remain at home and arrangements should be made for him/her to be tested. Please let us know immediately should your child test positive. The government have asked all schools to take forward contact tracing for the first 6 days after we break up for Christmas and so the school admin email address (above) will be staffed until the 24th December. This will be for the reporting of positive cases only. Therefore, please inform us of any cases, so that we can inform any possible close contacts. From the 25th December, Public Health England will take forward any contact tracing for the remainder of the school holidays, rather than schools.

Newcastle City Council have also asked schools to distribute the [attached guidance](#) to all families to support a safe mixing of households at Christmas.

Next term begins on **Tuesday 5th January 2021**. We are hopeful that staffing levels will be manageable again by then, therefore we expect all year groups to return to school on this day. Of course, should anything change, we will be in touch. We look forward to welcoming all students back into our care.

Many visitors comment on how well turned out the students are and I am very grateful to all parents for your support with this. Unfortunately, in the past, we have had the odd student returning after a holiday without full uniform, or with inappropriate shoes or an extreme hairstyle. I would be grateful if everyone can ensure that all students, without exception, adhere to the school's expectations in this area. The students will be reminded about this too. Please contact your child's Head of Year for any clarification of uniform and appearance expectations.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for all of your continued support for the school and I wish you a holy and peaceful Christmas with your families.

Yours faithfully,

Miss Patterson
Headteacher