

St Monica's R.C. High School



BURY OLD ROAD, PRESTWICH, MANCHESTER M25 1JH

Tel: 0161 773 6436

Fax: 0161 773 7155

Finance Dept: 0161 773 6436 Option 2/Ext 324 PE Dept: 0161 798 8206

Email: stmonicas@bury.gov.uk

Web: www.stmonicas.co.uk

Headteacher: Mr C Foley MA Hons (STA) PGCE

17th March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

We have been monitoring the situation regarding coronavirus (COVID-19) in school. Over the past 24 hours, we have seen an increasing number of pupils choosing to self-isolate based on government guidelines. Similarly, a number of staff have also chosen to self-isolate. We anticipate these numbers may well increase. Today we have looked carefully at the numbers of staff we require to operate an effective timetable. As I am sure you are aware, our building, although in a good condition, makes it incredibly difficult to combine classes as we only have a small number of larger spaces.

As such, in consultation with the Executive Board and with their approval, the decision has been made to partially close the school to Years 8, 9 and 10 from tomorrow and for the rest of the week. This is being done to reduce pupil numbers in school, to ensure an effective timetable can be run and to support pupils as they move towards end point examinations. It is not a decision that has been reached lightly and I fully appreciate the challenges this may pose.

We will review the situation regarding staffing on Friday and I will then update parents on plans for the following week. Pupils in Years 7 and 11 are to attend school as normal. Where there are parents who are currently working in essential services, eg NHS staff, police and other public services, should they wish, they can send their child(ren) to school regardless of their year group. I hope you can understand the reasoning behind this decision. We are working in both a challenging and unprecedented situation where we need to balance the wellbeing of pupils, their learning and also the wellbeing of staff.

For pupils who are currently in Years 8, 9 and 10, they will have access to work using the Show My Homework platform. This work will be set for them tomorrow and for the days that they are not in school.

We continue to receive daily updates from central government. New government guidelines issued yesterday include the following social distancing measures:

- **Your child should self-isolate for a period of 14 days if they or any members of the household have a recent new continuous cough and/or high temperature.**
- Those who are at increased risk of severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19) should follow social distancing measures. The list below can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults>
 - chronic (long-term) respiratory diseases, such as [asthma](#), [chronic obstructive pulmonary disease \(COPD\)](#), emphysema or [bronchitis](#)
 - chronic heart disease, such as [heart failure](#)
 - [chronic kidney disease](#)
 - chronic liver disease, such as [hepatitis](#)
 - [diabetes](#)
 - a weakened immune system as the result of medicines such as [steroid tablets](#) or [chemotherapy](#)

Specific guidelines are also in place for people with the following complex conditions:

- People who have received an organ transplant and remain on ongoing immunosuppression medication
- People with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy or radiotherapy
- People with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia who are at any stage of treatment
- People with severe chest conditions such as cystic fibrosis or severe asthma (requiring hospital admissions or courses of steroid tablets)
- People with severe diseases of body systems, such as severe kidney disease (dialysis)

Following this updated advice from the government, if your child is self-isolating, please contact the school Attendance Officer on 0161 773 6436 Option 1 and state that they are self-isolating.

In school we continue to take precautions as has been shared with you over the last two weeks. Our aim is to keep routines as normal as possible.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C Foley', written in a cursive style.

Mr C Foley
Headteacher
@HT_StMonicas