



# St Bernadette Catholic Secondary School

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23rd March 2020

Dear Parents/ Carers,

Today we have the start of a school week like no other we have experienced. From today all schools are closed to pupils, except for the children of key workers and vulnerable pupils for whom no other arrangements are available. We appreciate how difficult things are and thank you for the arrangements you have made for the care of your children.

## Key workers

We would like to thank all key workers for the tremendous job you are doing to care for and protect our communities and society. We appreciate that the demands on you will be continually changing and some of you who currently do not need to send your child into school, may need to do so in the future. To ensure we are ready to welcome all pupils who need to be in school, please can you email us on [info@stbems.bristol.sch.uk](mailto:info@stbems.bristol.sch.uk) with your child's name and year group the day before your child will be in school. Thank you.

## Keeping safe

Please remember to follow the advice:

- Wash your hands often - with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use a hand sanitiser when you get home or into work, when you blow your nose, sneeze or cough, eat or handle food
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in a bin and wash your hands
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- Work from home if possible
- Keep a social distance from others. Avoid public places and if you go out keep a distance of at least two metres between yourself and others
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces in the home

You must stay at home and self-isolate for seven days if you have Coronavirus symptoms:

- A temperature over 37.8
- A new continuous cough - this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or three or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)

If someone in your house has symptoms, you must self-isolate for fourteen days from the start of their symptoms.

## Supporting your child while schools are closed

- Being educated at home is very different to being in a school environment and routine is key. Stick to a routine with your child. Make sure you create a daily

structure with your child which includes breaks. Enjoy breakfast and mealtimes together and plan a day of focused schoolwork activities. Teachers, who are able to do so are setting work via Google Classroom. They will also try to respond to any queries your child raises or provide feedback on any work they upload on Google Classroom.

- Additional work is also available via the school website. By clicking on the **Faculty Resource Hub** links your child will be able to access materials produced by subject staff. Consider using afternoons as creative and practical learning time doing things such as looking at nature, carrying out scientific experiments, drawing, reading, cooking or keeping active. Do not forget to include exercise.
- Try to limit the amount of time your child spends using technology. They need to have a variety of activities and too much screen time is not good for anyone.
- Fresh air is good for our health and exercise is an important part of our daily lives. Fresh air has been shown to help us digest food more effectively, improve blood pressure, heart rate, and strengthen our immune systems. It also makes us happier by promoting higher levels of positive emotions.
- Talk to your child about any concerns or worries they have during uncertain times. Listen to them, support them and encourage them to stay connected with their friends or wider family using online methods. Reassure them and try to keep them motivated.
- Being distanced from friends and needing to isolate can have a negative effect on mental health and happiness. Children need some independence and time to connect with others. They also need reassurance, kindness and love so keep an eye on your child's happiness, emotions and moods.

### **Free School Meals**

There have been a few teething issues with the provision of free school meals and the arrangements for children in receipt of FSM continue to be developed. This is due to factors beyond our control and we apologise for any distress or inconvenience caused. The current arrangements are:

- A parcel containing provisions for five days' lunches will be available for collection from school tomorrow and thereafter each Monday .
- If you have children at more than one school you can collect all the parcels from one school. Please let us know if you will be collecting for children from other schools at St Bernadette's.
- If you prefer to collect your parcel at a school closer to your home, please email us at [info@stberns.bristol.sch.uk](mailto:info@stberns.bristol.sch.uk) giving your child's name and the school you wish to collect from. We will pass this information to the meal providers who will make the necessary arrangements.
- If you are self-isolating and are unable to collect your parcel but have someone who can collect it for you, please email the school with the name of the person and we will hand the parcel to them. If you have no one to collect the parcel for you, let us know and Chartwells, the meal provider, will look to arrange a delivery, although this is not something they can guarantee at this stage.

### **Year 11 exams**

We shared the information we received about exams with you last Friday and will continue to keep you updated. You may find the following information helpful.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-cancellation-of-gcses-as-and-a-levels-in-2020/coronavirus-covid-19-cancellation-of-gcses-as-and-a-levels-in-2020>

### **Government information for parents/ carers**

The Government has produced the following information for parents:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

### **Communicating with you**

We continue to be committed to keeping in touch with all members of our school community during the period of school closure. We will be in touch with you by email at least once each week and more often if required. Our school telephones will not be staffed all of the time but emails are checked throughout the working day and will be forwarded to the most appropriate person.

### **And finally a prayer**

*God of love and hope, You made the world and care for all creation, but the world feels strange right now.*

*The news is full of stories about Coronavirus. Some people are worried that they might get ill.*

*Others are anxious for their family and friends. Be with them and help them to find peace.*

*We pray for the doctors and nurses and scientists, and all who are working to discover the right medicines to help those who are ill.*

*Thank You that even in these anxious times, You are with us. Help us to put our trust in You and keep us safe.*

*We make our prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

*St Bernadette...Pray for us.*

Best wishes

Mrs McLaughlin