



Diocese of St. Albans



ST MARY'S
CE HIGH SCHOOL

18^h March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

Re: Covid-19 (Coronavirus)

Thank you for your on-going support at this tricky time.

School closed

As no doubt you are aware from the news, all schools in England have been closed to most students from Friday 20 March until further notice. We have been planning for keeping education running at home in this event, and I will be meeting with colleagues tomorrow and Friday to put the finishing touches on this to communicate with you. Please ensure your child has their Show My Homework login and you can log in with them.

Vulnerable children, children of Key Workers and Summer 2020 Exams

The Prime Minister said that schools will be open for vulnerable children and At the time of writing, there is not a definitive list of the definition of 'key workers', but it is clear that schools are needed to support this group of adults to enable them to carry out essential work in the fight against Coronavirus and we are more than happy to do this. We also have a duty to support the students who are classed as vulnerable, and take this role equally seriously. Additionally, the Prime Minister said 'Exams will be cancelled in May and June'.

At the time of writing, we do not know how these assessments will work to award grades to students. I totally understand that you would like more answers and clarity over these strategies, especially if your sons/daughters have public exams this summer, but I urge you not to call and email the school about this tomorrow or Friday. Fielding calls/emails about this will take a lot of time and prevent us putting in place the strategies we need to ensure these changes run smoothly and I promise I will keep you up to date with information as I get it. I thank you in advance for your co-operation with this.

Condensed classes

While we are open we will continue with the programme of having students in other classes whilst student absence allows this, to prevent closure of entire year groups. This worked well today. Following a query from a parent, I can guarantee classes will not be bigger than normal (i.e. class size will be 30 or less).

Support

I have shared this link with staff, but it also may be useful for you in supporting any of your children with anxiety over the Corona Virus situation: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/talking-with-children.html>

Learning Websites

We will be uploading resources for lessons on to Show My Homework (your son/daughter needs to log in to see these). However, I thought it worth sharing some useful online resources to support you at home.

ASPIRE • CHALLENGE • SUCCEED

Lieutenant Ellis Way, Cheshunt, Hertfordshire EN7 5FB t: 01992 629124 f: 01992 643354
e: admin@st-maryshigh.herts.sch.uk w: www.st-maryshigh.herts.sch.uk
Head Teacher: Mr Nicholas Simms B.Sc. (Hons), NPQH

'Students feel happy and safe at school' OFSTED 2019
'An exceptionally inclusive and caring community' SIAMS Inspection (2020)

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These are not intended to replace the work we set, but there may be things that support it and they may help you find activities for your sons and daughters if they are getting bored being stuck at home (including younger children not with us yet)! They are all branded as being appropriate for children, but the age ranges vary. It is your responsibility to check that you are happy the content of any of these is suitable for your children.

BBC Learning <http://www.bbc.co.uk/learning/coursesearch/>

This site is old and no longer updated and yet there is so much still available, from language learning to BBC Bitesize for revision.

Seneca <https://www.senecalearning.com>

For those revising at GCSE or A level. A lot of free revision content. · Blockly <https://blockly.games>
Learn computer programming skills - fun and free.

Literacy website: <https://freerice.com/>

A free website that donates rice whilst challenging your literacy skills. Different difficulty levels and different aspects of literacy (vocabulary or grammar)

Scratch <https://scratch.mit.edu/explore/projects/games/>

Creative computer programming

National Geographic Kids <https://www.natgeokids.com/uk/>

Activities and quizzes for younger students

Duolingo <https://www.duolingo.com>

Learn languages for free. Web or app based

The Kids Should See This <https://thekidshoulseethis.com>

Wide range of educational videos

Crash Course <https://thecrashcourse.com>

You Tube videos on many subjects

Crest Awards <https://www.crestawards.org>

Science awards you can complete from home.

iDEA Awards <https://idea.org.uk>

Digital enterprise award scheme you can complete online

Tinkercad <https://www.tinkercad.com>

All kinds of making/design

Big History Project <https://www.bighistoryproject.com/home>

Aimed at Secondary age. Multi disciplinary activities.

Geography Games <https://world-geography-games.com/world.html>

Geography games.

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The Artful Parent <https://www.facebook.com/artfulparent/>
Good, free art activities

DK Find Out
<https://www.dkfindout.com/uk/?fbclid=IwAR2wJdpSJSeITf4do6aPhff8A3tAktnmpaxqZbkgudD49I71ep8-sjXmrac>
Activities and quizzes

Twinkl <https://www.twinkl.co.uk>
This is more for printouts, and usually at a fee, but they are offering a month of free access to parents in the event of school closures.

Thank you

I want to offer my personal thanks to the staff of St Mary's who have been so committed to keeping your children's education going this week. This commitment will continue, albeit remotely for most. I also want to thank you and wish you and your families well over the coming weeks. We are in strange times and I look forward to a return to normality and having your children back with us full time.

I will be communicating regularly with any updates, especially over the exams for Y11 and Y13, with any information about how this situation will be managed. In the meantime, please look after yourselves and each other; St Mary's Church vicar, Rev Eugene Hanshaw, is holding the whole community, parents/carers included, in his prayers and I ask you to do the same in your own homes and places of worship.

Yours faithfully



Nicholas Simms
Headteacher

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