**St Mark’s Catholic School**

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19th June 2020

**Face-to-face support for Year 10 students**

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to provide an update regarding our plans for Year 10. It has been an absolute joy to see the students who came into school this week for a meeting with their tutor or teacher. There has also been very positive feedback from teachers following the phone conversations as well. It is very reassuring that the overwhelming majority of students have been adjusting to remote learning despite the challenges. We know that it is hard to stay motivated without the classroom support of teachers and contact with their peers.

We would now like to invite all Year 10 students to attend a learning session in school in order to provide academic and practical support to supplement their ongoing remote learning. The learning session will last for three hours in total, and will be divided between English and maths. There will also be an opportunity for advice regarding study, online learning and any provide any further support that may be required. Students will be divided into small groups and will remain in a designated classroom with desks arranged 2 metres apart. Students will have a short break in the middle of the session. The sessions will take place during the week beginning 6th July and further details regarding the date and time of your child’s session will be provided in due course. There will be staggered start and end times for each group, but the timings will be around 10am – 1pm to avoid peak travel times.

Over the past few weeks we have been ensuring that the site is prepared for staff and students in line with government guidance on social distancing and minimising the risk of infection. Risk Assessments have been undertaken and the school had an external, independent Risk Assessment carried out by Ellis Whittam on Thursday 11th June.

During this time we will be adhering to strict government guidelines which includes:

* maintaining social distancing
* small groups of students for each session
* student desks arranged 2 metres apart
* cleaning hands more often than usual - students and staff are encouraged to regularly wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with running water and soap and dry them thoroughly, or use sanitiser ensuring that all parts of the hands are covered
* ensuring good respiratory hygiene by promoting the ‘catch it, bin it, kill it’ approach
* cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products such as detergents and bleach,
* minimising contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that students or staff who have coronavirus symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend school.

Students are advised to avoid public transport if possible, however if no alternative is available, they must wear a face covering. If they have to use public transport to get to school, please read the Government’s advice: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel- guidance-for-passengers. Students who are attending school by bike or walking must again maintain a social distance at all times and enter the premises by the student gate.

We will not be expecting students to wear uniform, as we hope this will make it easier for families to wash clothes after the session in school and we do not want to add additional financial burdens onto families by having to replace items of uniform at this time. However, please ensure that your son/daughter is appropriately dressed for school (i.e. no shorts, vest tops, revealing clothing). If your child requires a snack or drink they will need to bring this as there will be no opportunity to purchase food or drink in school and the water fountains cannot be used. Students must also come prepared with a pen and paper.

It is absolutely essential that the following advice is followed at all times. A student must stay at home and self-isolate if they or anyone else in their household is showing symptoms of the coronavirus. Further details about the symptoms are available here: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/>. This advice must be adhered to without exception.

Please take note of the following advice should your child have any underlying healthcare issues:

**Clincally vulnerable or clinically extremely vulnerable individuals**

* If your child has been classed as clinically vulnerable, you should follow medical advice about whether your child can return to school. Please notify the school if your GP recommends that any additional steps are taken for your child to return to school.
* If your child lives with someone who is clinically vulnerable, the Government guidance states that your child can still return to school.
* If your child is clinically extremely vulnerable and has been advised to shield, they are not expected to return to school and we will support them to work from home. Again, please notify the school if your child falls into this category.
* If your child lives with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable, the Government guidance states that they can only return to school if stringent social distancing can be adhered to they follow those instructions at all times. Please inform the school if your household (or any other households your child lives in) falls into this category so that we can discuss whether your child can return to school or if they should stay at home.

For further information about who is classified as clinically vulnerable and clinically extremely vulnerable, please visit: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk-from- coronavirus/whos-at-higher-risk-from-coronavirus/

We believe that these sessions are very important for all Year 10 students, however you may decide not to send your child into school. This could be for a variety of reasons and it is down to individual families to make this decision. The Government has stated that parents who choose to keep their children at home will not be fined or suffer other consequences. We would be grateful if you could please complete the Google Form to indicate whether your child will be attending by **Tuesday 23rd June**: <https://forms.gle/nw5EpvL5gfYNvEeG8>. This is to satisfy safeguarding requirements so we know who to expect in school each session.

I realise that there is a great deal of information in this letter but I am sure you appreciate the reasons for this. Thank you for your ongoing support and understanding and we will look forward to seeing our Year 10 students again. If you have any queries, please contact us via [staffroom@st-marks.hounslow.sch.uk](mailto:staffroom@st-marks.hounslow.sch.uk).

Yours faithfully,

A close up of a logo

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Ms A. Waugh-Lucas,

Headteacher