



19<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

It was announced yesterday that schools will close from the end of the day on Friday and will remain closed until further notice. There are some children whose circumstances will determine that they will continue to be able to come into school as normal. Examples of these include children whose parent(s) are key workers such as NHS staff, police and delivery drivers who need to be able to go to work. A full list of key workers categories will be published today. The Prime Minister has advised that children should **not** be left with older grandparents or older relatives who may be particularly vulnerable to the coronavirus.

We do not currently have information regarding parents who are '**key workers**' so we urgently ask you to email [onlinereporting@st-marks.hounslow.sch.uk](mailto:onlinereporting@st-marks.hounslow.sch.uk) if you consider yourself to be a key worker and need to send your child to school on Monday. I do need to stress that the government are continuing to advise everyone to avoid all non-essential social contact and travel in order to reduce the spread of COVID -19 which is highly contagious. We have not yet had a confirmed case of COVID - 19 at St. Mark's, however it is impossible to know if staff or students in our school community already have the virus or have come into contact with it. Members of our school community have symptoms which may or may not be COVID-19 and it appears likely that it is contagious before symptoms appear. Some people may have no symptoms or mild symptoms but still be contagious. The health and safety of our school and wider community has to be our greatest priority at this time. If you do decide to send your child to school from Monday, we will provide supervision as they complete the work that has been set for the rest of their peers.

## Remote Learning

As indicated in my letter (dated 13/3/20) teachers will mainly be using 'Show my Homework' and 'Google Classroom' to ensure that your child is able to continue their studies remotely. It is essential that students check SMHW and complete the work/home learning tasks set. The educational needs of the students will vary across the school and guidance will be relevant for each year group. I have also attached a document of useful online resources to support your child's learning. All students should also check their school Gmail (@st-marks.me.uk) account in case there has been communication from a teacher. It is not appropriate for students to contact their teachers using a non - St. Mark's email. Please note, that teachers may be unwell or looking after relatives who are unwell. They will do their best to support your child's learning.

## GCSE and A Level Examinations

The Prime Minister confirmed that public examinations will not go ahead, but that they 'will ensure children get the qualifications that they need'. We appreciate that this will cause frustration and anxiety for our students in Year 11 and Year 13 who have been working so hard to prepare for these examinations. In particular, we are extremely proud of the Year 11 students who are in school completing their PPE exams this morning. Unfortunately, whilst we await further information regarding the government plans, my advice is for all of Year 11 and Year 13 students to continue studying and completing the work that will be provided by their teachers. It is important that students wishing to go onto further study, or who may be seeking an employment reference, demonstrate continued commitment and maintain their efforts, even in these difficult times.

## Support and advice

Please continue to check the latest advice from Public Health regarding Covid-19: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

**Please note that if anyone in your home has continuous cough or fever – the government are asking that the whole family stays at home for the next 14 days.** If your child has an underlying medical condition and you are concerned that they are at risk of becoming seriously unwell if they catch COVID-19 – government advice is that they should stay at home

We also understand that many parents will be concerned about the financial impact of the Coronavirus. The Government announced that a national voucher system would be introduced for those eligible for free school meals. We do not have further information at this stage, however we will be writing to parents separately regarding support available at this challenging time.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the closure, please avoid visiting the school. Please contact us by email [onlinereporting@st-marks.hounslow.sch.uk](mailto:onlinereporting@st-marks.hounslow.sch.uk). As soon as we have an official date to re-open, we will communicate this with you via email and the school website.

In the meantime, we pray for God's blessing on all members of our school community in this challenging and uncertain situation.

Yours faithfully,



Ms A. Waugh-Lucas,  
Headteacher