

St. Gregory's Catholic High School



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Headteacher
Mr E McGlinchey BSc (Hons), NPQH & NPQEL

3rd April 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I write to you at the end of the second week of the partial school closure. It is clear that we are still in the early stages of the national lockdown process and schools are to remain closed, other than for key workers, for the foreseeable future. Whilst it is sad and just not the same without our wonderful pupils in school, it is also important that we stand firm on observing and practising the strict government and medical advice to slow and eventually stop the spread of Covid-19.

St Gregory's has remained open throughout this crisis and closure with a small team of dedicated staff who are on a rota to support vulnerable children and the children of critical key workers and we will continue to do this with the good will of our staff and manageable pupil numbers; so far this support has worked well for the key workers that need us most. I would like to thank all parents for your considerate and thoughtful approach to our own staff who are equally as anxious and feeling as vulnerable as anyone else in these difficult times.

I am extremely proud of my staff who are living out our school mission of '**stand up and be counted**' and epitomising our motto of '**one family inspired to learn**' through their complete selflessness towards the supporting of others beyond their own families. It is very humbling to see how the community has pulled together and supported each other but I expected nothing less of my colleagues.

I desperately look forward to the day when we can open our gates to all pupils and we can return to what we enjoy most, delivering education and personal development to our young people. In the meantime I want to provide you with some practical advice while the school remains closed.

Learning at home

Teaching staff continue to set work during term time for all pupils and I have been very impressed by the level of commitment shown by your children to adapt to working from home which is not easy. It is essential that your children stay on top of their work to reduce gaps when they return to normal school life.

It has been wonderful to view the type of work being done at home and the creativity of staff, pupils and you as parents never ceases to amaze me. You can keep up to date with the content your child should be learning by accessing the school website and clicking on the 'curriculum' section, then 'subjects' and then selecting the subject curriculum map you wish to review.

I imagine that time at home supporting your children with learning has brought out the inner **teacher** in a lot of our parents and carers and you may now think that teaching could be the profession for you when life returns to normal? I look forward to your applications!

'One family... inspired to learn.'

SEAL it with RESPECT

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Online security and guidance

It is important that as your children are using online learning resources more and more due to school closure, that you keep yourself aware of online safety guidance.

Practical tips to help minimise the risks your children might face:

- It is good practice for apps and websites to have safety advice and well-designed safety features which can make a real difference to how safe your child will be when using them. Work through safety and privacy features on the apps that your child is using, or might use. Make sure they understand the point of these and how to use them.
- Don't be put off by believing your child knows more than you: the tools are actually quite easy to manage.
- Ask them to show you which social media apps they use and what they like about them. Talk about how they use them and what makes them so engaging
- Explain how you can use privacy settings to make sure only approved friends can see posts & images
- Check if any of their apps have 'geo-location' enabled, sharing their location unintentionally
- Show them how to report offensive comments or block people who upset them
- Check 'tagging' settings so that when others are posting or sharing photos online, your child's identity is not revealed. Also, get people's consent before sharing photos
- Encourage your children to come and talk to you if they see anything that upsets them

The full government guidance can be accessed via this link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-safety-online-a-practical-guide-for-parents-and-carers/child-safety-online-a-practical-guide-for-parents-and-carers-whose-children-are-using-social-media>

Safeguarding guidance

For Safeguarding issues during the Easter 'holiday' period, please ring the school on **01925 574888** and choose the Safeguarding Option where an answer machine is in place out of hours or a staff member will check during opening hours. You can also visit our Safeguarding page for contact numbers.

A safeguarding newsletter is also now available through the school website, and through our school comms text/email service.

Assessment for Year 11 cohort of 2019/2020

At the time of completing this letter on Friday afternoon, we have still not received the updated or confirmed guidance on how Year 11 pupil's grades will be determined this summer. As soon as this information is available, I will ensure that it is passed to all parents and carers and pupils of Year 11.

Easter Blessings

I would like to wish you all a very happy and holy Easter. Despite the crisis we are going through globally, Easter allows us to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus and spring allows us to reflect on renewal in the midst of a period of great adversity. We must remember to support each other, look after each other and to have patience with each other as we also collectively and individually work our way through this dark period as we look to once again see brighter and better days.

St Gregory's is a strong, powerful community and together we will stay strong and come out of this crisis as 'one family inspired to learn'.

Yours sincerely,



E. McGlinchey
Headteacher