



St Joseph's Roman Catholic High School

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Registered Charity Number: 1075795 | **Facebook/Twitter:** StJosephsRCHS

5th November 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

You will probably be aware after doing so well to avoid the consequences of Coronavirus for so long, since returning from half term we have had a challenging time in terms of new Covid Infections within our community.

Although some new cases are in the same year group there is little evidence to show that they are connected. We believe that young people are safer in school and that the normal routine of school supports better positive mental health and gives students the best chance to learn and achieve well, so we have tried at all costs to keep students in school safely. However, we have always maintained that we would only bring students into school where it is safe to do so. During the past two weeks we have had up to 10 absent staff per day. Colleagues in school and a few select supply teachers have been covering for absent colleagues to try to keep as much normality as possible for our young people.

Despite our best efforts to keep Coronavirus out of St Joseph's we now have 6 seemingly unconnected, confirmed cases within our student population. All 6 had been in school during the 48 hours prior to symptoms developing. This has meant that we have had to trace contacts (class mates, breaktime friends, those travelling near etc.) We have done this under advice from Public Health and in discussion with the student. Where we have been in any doubt, we have asked children and staff to isolate as a precaution. **All those affected have either been spoken to in person or received a text/email to outline the time and reason for isolation.**

Where a whole year group has been asked to isolate while we accurately track students, we have informed students whether they need to continue in their isolation through epraise. If this applies, you will find documents by clicking the cogs at the top right-hand side of the epraise home page, a drop-down box will appear and then you can then click on 'view documents'.

To keep all members of the community informed here is a summary of our current situation:



DIocese of SALFORD



Y10 – 175 Students isolating (Due to 2 unconnected positive cases. Whole year group due to complex nature of option subject groups)

- Date self-isolation ends: Monday 16th November
- Date of return to school: Tuesday 17th November

Y9 – 85 Students isolating (Due to 1 case)

- Date self-isolation ends: Tuesday 17th November
- Date of return to school: Wednesday 18th November

Y8- 122 Students isolating (Due to 3 seemingly unconnected positive cases)

- Date self-isolation ends: Tuesday 17th November
- Date of return to school: Wednesday 18th November

As I am sure you can imagine, the whole process of tracking is very complicated and time consuming, but if in doubt we have erred on the side of caution. Staff in school and some isolating at home have been streaming lessons, setting narrated PowerPoint lessons or setting independent work. The type of work often depends on whether the staff member is well and in school. Some teachers have been able to live stream whilst there are non-isolating students in the class. We realise that this doesn't suit everyone and we note that TEAMS requires a certain bandwidth and processor size. We are looking to make this easier for you as an end user perhaps using the more simplistic Zoom package and will also provide some form of help clinic for those struggling next week. Variety of different types of work in moderation will be our aim so that we can meet all students preferred style, but please bear with us as we work to improve this with reduced staffing levels.

Many thanks for all your support in these challenging times.

Take care, look after each other and God Bless!

Tony McCabe

Headteacher