

St Wilfrid's Catholic School

St Wilfrid's Way, Old Horsham Road, Crawley, West Sussex RH11 8PG
Tel: 01293 421421 Fax: 01293 421429 Email: office@stwilfrids.com
www.stwilfrids.com @stwilfridschool



Headteacher: Michael Ferry BEd (Hons) MA NPQH

Diocese of Arundel & Brighton and West Sussex County Council

22 December 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

I sincerely hope that you are all well and looking forward to Christmas despite the impact of the Prime Ministers announcement on Saturday.

You may already be aware that on the last day of term, the government made a significant announcement regarding their wish for secondary schools to implement a programme of mass testing for Covid-19 at the start of next term. Along with this, they have instructed schools to change the arrangements for the first week of the new term to reduce the number of students in school to help slow the rate of virus transmission.

As I write this, the promise of a new set of guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) has not been forthcoming. As a result, the information I am providing you with now is subject to change either through publication of new guidance or as a result of the next Tier Revue scheduled for 30th December. If this does occur then I will contact you again as soon as possible.

Testing in schools:

At present, we will not be implementing a testing programme at the beginning of January. The extremely late announcement of the government's desire for testing to take place in schools, coupled with a lack of staff, lack of training, the organisational requirements including parental permission, legal liabilities and not having the facilities to do it in, all mean that it is not feasible to implement a testing programme as the government would wish. Put simply, this is not something which can be implemented "overnight"!

This announcement was made without consultation with the Education profession and as such it has raised a significant amount of concerns and questions which need to be addressed before greater clarity can be given as to how schools can play a part in a mass testing programme. I will inform you when I am able should the situation change.

Start of term w/b 4th January:

The government have instructed all secondary schools to alter their plans for the start of term. The changes are outlined below:

- Monday 4th January: this will now be an Inset Day – no students to attend school.
- Tuesday 5th – Friday 8th:
 - Year 11 & 13 students should attend as normal.
 - Year 7-10 & 12 working from home; online work will be supplied as previous using Teams (Mrs Denyer will resend information/instructions).

- The groups of students identified below are also able to attend school from Tuesday – Friday however, it is likely that they will form a separate “bubble” and be supervised by a Cover Supervisor whilst they complete the online learning being set for them by their individual teachers i.e. they will not receive “taught” lessons. I cannot confirm specific arrangements at this time due to the uncertainty over numbers. All students should attend wearing school uniform.
 - Students who have an EHCP: Mrs Kerr (SENDCo) or a member of the SEND dept. will contact you on Monday 4th January to discuss the situation/confirm whether your child will be attending or working from home.
 - Students who are considered “vulnerable” as defined by the government guidance: Mrs Rumbol (Safeguarding Officer) will contact you on Monday 4th to discuss the situation/confirm whether your child will be attending or working from home.
 - Students whose parents/carers are classed as critical workers are able to attend however, I would ask that you only look to send your child to school if there are no other alternatives. In order to register your son/daughter, please use the link below to register that you/your child is eligible. Please do so by **9am Wednesday 30th December**: <https://www.stwilfrids.com/form/?pid=8&form=47>

Mock Exams for Year 11 and 13:

No mock exams are scheduled for Year 11 on Monday 4th and all other exams for that week will take place as planned. The Year 13 Media Studies mock exam which was scheduled for Monday 4th January will be rescheduled; students will be informed of the new date at the start of term. All other Year 13 mock exams and BTEC public exams will take place as normal.

I recognise that these late changes bring uncertainty and frustration at what I know is a difficult time for many, but I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your ongoing support which has been invaluable during these unprecedented times.

Wishing you a safe, happy and holy Christmas.

Yours sincerely



Michael Ferry
Headteacher