

# Oaklands Catholic School and Sixth Form College

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**Headteacher:** Matthew Quinn B.Ed (Hons), M.A., NPQH

Our Ref: MQ/SM

20 November 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

As I am sure you are aware, absence levels in some schools across the country have reached critical levels. Fortunately, we have not reached this point, but it is important that I warn you of the contingency plans we have in place if this is the case.

In many of my weekly letters I very clearly stated how important collective responsibility is in these difficult times; we must follow the rules and guidance. I would like to reiterate that it is incumbent upon us all to make the right decisions at the right time to keep as many of our students and staff in school as possible. Therefore, I am now restating in the strongest possible terms that you must follow the guidance below:

If **anyone** in your household has symptoms and goes for a COVID-19 test or is going to go for a test, **DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILDREN INTO SCHOOL**. Only once the test result is received and it is negative can a child return to school.

If **your child** is not well or if they show any of the symptoms of COVID-19, **PLEASE KEEP THEM OFF SCHOOL** and secure a test for them as soon as possible.

Let us know as soon as your child goes for the test using the absence number 02392 248053, or the email [provision@oaklandscatholicschool.org](mailto:provision@oaklandscatholicschool.org). Only send your child back into school when they (or the member of the household) has had a negative test result, are fully recovered, or at the end of the isolation period.

We know from experience that when parents/carers fail to follow this simple guidance it will impact on other students and staff, who through no fault of their own then have to self-isolate for 14 days, missing vital school time. Missing school time is not good for any years, but has a more significant impact for those pupils studying their GCSE's and A levels. I yet again implore all parents to follow the guidance.

If you are unsure about whether to send your children in because of a particular set of circumstances, **PLEASE DO NOT SEND THEM IN** and telephone or email for further guidance. Please contact the school absence number 02392 248053 or email [provision@oaklandscatholicschool.org](mailto:provision@oaklandscatholicschool.org); these are monitored out of hours and at weekends as well as during the school day to ensure we can respond in a timely manner to information received.

**Please do not use any other means of communication to advise us of information related to COVID-19 as these may not be monitored.**

Thank you for your support at this difficult time.

## Contingency Plans

I wrote to you last week to talk about some of the operational issues the school is facing. Since that letter we are now experiencing difficulties that may not have been envisaged by the new lockdown legislation.

Despite the current restrictions, staff do come in contact with others, either at home or going about normal business. This has led to a number of staff and students being contacted by the track and trace system and them being asked to self-isolate for 14 days. We now have a number of staff who are in the clinically extremely vulnerable category and are shielding, staff who are isolating and staff who are now looking after dependants. All of this is creating significant pressure on the number of available staff in school.

Hence, we are having to make contingency plans for the eventuality where we do not physically have enough staff to open the school to all years safely. I am aware that other schools in the Havant Federation have sent year groups home or are considering doing so for the same reasons.

Presently, our thinking is that should we reach certain thresholds (approximately 20 staff absent), we may need to send a year group home where they would transfer to our home learning package. This provision would continue for the remainder of that teaching week, with the year group then returning to school on the following Monday.

Week Commencing	Year Group	Reserve Year Group
23 <sup>rd</sup> November	Year 10	Year 12
30 <sup>th</sup> November	Year 9	Year 8
7 <sup>th</sup> December	Year 8	Year 10
14 <sup>th</sup> December	Year 12	Year 9

**For a point of clarity, we have not moved to this plan yet.  
All students not in isolation should be in school next week.**

Hopefully we will not need to activate the plan, but I thought it would be helpful for forward planning purposes if we shared this information with you in advance. If we do need to enact this plan, the decision will be made at the end of the day to provide the school with enough time to fully assess the staffing situation. Please keep an eye on the school website.

If we have a positive case in school, be it student or staff, the group or year group of students who had contact with that person will be required to self-isolate at home for 14 days. This time frame is determined by the start date of the person, who has tested positive, experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. These will be in addition to the groups listed above.

If it is necessary for students to work from home, home learning through MS Teams will start the first day students are at home.

Our priority would be to maintain provision for students in their final exam year. We are also conscious that for some students in Year 7 it may not be appropriate for them to remain at home unsupervised which is why we have not included them at this point.

## Prayer Marathon

Next Friday, 27<sup>th</sup> November, we intend to hold a Prayer Marathon in school. I hope that we can stream this live throughout the day via YouTube. We will be praying for an end to the pandemic. In addition to this there are a number of staff, students and former students who are experiencing particular difficulties at this time. We want to storm Heaven with our prayers and intentions in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. The link to this event will appear on our school website. Please spread the word and join us in prayer from your homes.

## Christmas Festivities

At Oaklands there has always been a strong tradition of Christmas festivities at the end of this Autumn term. Unfortunately, it is not going to be possible to engage in these this year, for example, the Christmas concerts and carols services. Some of these events will move on-line for the wider community. We are also considering what events we can achieve in school for students that are COVID safe.

Best wishes and thank you again for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matthew Quinn', written in a cursive style.

Mr M Quinn  
**Headteacher**