



LO/JT/744

11th December 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

I hope that you are safe and well. **We have a less than a week of the school term remaining before we break for the Christmas holidays.** During this time we will continue to do all we can to ensure that the learning experience in school continues to be the very best that we can provide in the current circumstances. I continue to be hugely impressed with the positive attitude and determination of all our students and grateful for the support and understanding from families as we continue to work together. Please see below some key updates as we approach the end of our first term of the academic year.

End of Term arrangements

In line with the DfE guidance, school will be closed on Friday, December 18th and home learning resources will be provided for your child/ren on that day via Firefly. The last school day of this academic year will be Thursday 17th December. The school day will run as normal.

We will welcome children back to school on Monday 4th January 2021.

Plans for the last week of term

In the run up to the Christmas break, I would normally be writing to you to inform you of all the wonderful events taking place at school, Year 7 Disco, Christmas performance, GCSE Awards Evening etc. Unfortunately – it won't be possible to run these this year. However, that hasn't stopped some of our wonderful staff and students being creative and creating our very own Christmas Virtual Variety show and many pupils will also be taking part in a Santa Dash.

Thursday 17th December - **non-uniform day**. Please note that this is the last day of term and will be a non –uniform day (Christmas Jumpers encouraged!). Donations of £1 will go to Derby and Burton Hospitals Charity. Donations can either be paid in cash on day or preferably in advance via ParentPay account, the name of this is listed as 'non-uniform day 17.12.2020'

GCSE Examinations 2021

I know that many of you will have seen the news last week in relation to proposed changes to GCSE and A-Level assessments for the summer. The government has declared that in England examinations will go ahead as normal.



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Blessed Robert Sutton Catholic Voluntary Academy
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Company Number 7937154



**St Ralph
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Catholic Multi Academy Trust



Although we will get the final details in January, the proposals include the following (quoted directly from the AQA website):

- More generous grading than usual, in line with 2020
- Students receiving advance notice of some topic areas covered in GCSE to help them focus their revision
- Exam aids (like formula sheets) provided in some exams to give students more confidence and reduce the amount of information they need to memorise
- Contingency exams (held shortly after the main exam series) so students can sit a paper if they miss all their assessments in a subject because of illness or self-isolation

The new measures complement the existing changes for next summer, which include:

- Reduced content in many subjects
- A delay to the start of exams and changes to the timetable.

There will be further information given to schools about the arrangements for summer 2021 examinations. In the meantime, the best advice we can give students is to work as hard as you possibly can and not to waste a second in school when you have face-to-face teaching, because it only takes one positive COVID-19 case for you to be self-isolating at home.

School Plans for January 2021

Thank you to all parents, students and staff who have completed our Quality Assurance Surveys so far – the link for the surveys can be found on the Firefly Parent Portal.

Feedback so far shows that the overwhelming majority feel very safe and our systems and procedures have ensured that staff and students feel secure and any risks are reduced to a minimum.

The feedback we have received so far has also helped inform our refinements going forward which are summarised below:

- School day timings to continue (8.25 am for all students).
- Departure for students to continue to be staggered for the duration of the spring term.
- We are looking to extend lunch from 40 minutes to 45 minutes, final details will be published before Christmas, only 5 minutes more but we think it is worth it!
- Year 7 groupings will be changed slightly to allow for a greater level of support and challenge in Maths lessons.
- PE lessons for Years 7-11 will continue as before – in line with guidance from Sporting National Governing Bodies.
- We have recently purchased new Parents' Consultation Evening software, which will help aid our commitment to provide parents with feedback and communication. The first trial will be with Year 11 parents on February 4th ! We know we cannot invite parents and carers onto the site in vast numbers, but we also recognise the importance of continuous communication.



Christmas Hampers

We have had a tremendous response to our Christmas Hamper Appeal. So, THANK YOU so much. There are families across our school who will have a truly Happy Christmas now because of your generosity.

Free School Meal Voucher for over Christmas

Staffordshire County Council will be providing all pupils who receive FSM with a £30 voucher to support them over the Christmas holiday. This voucher can be redeemed at the supermarket of choice for the family.

Over the past week our Admin team have emailed these voucher codes out to parents and this will be followed this up with a phone call to check they have received the voucher and to ensure there are no issues. If you have not received the voucher or have any issues with regards to FSM please contact laura.wilson@robertsutton.staffs.sch.uk .

If at any point over the Christmas break there are a number of food banks that can support families at this time:

Burton:

- YMCA Burton Reconnect– 01283 547211
- Salvation Army Community Food Bank Burton on Trent UK – Facebook tel: 01283517116
burton.on.trent@salvationarmy.org.uk
- Burton Hope – Facebook Only (Not just Burton)

Swadlincote:

- CVS - 07458 305314 projectsupport@sdcv.org.uk

Ashby De la Zouch:

- 07542 118878 info@ashbyfoodbank.org.uk

COVID-19

How we decide whether students should be self-isolating when we have a positive case

When we have a positive case I personally contact the parents of the student who has tested positive for COVID-19. We spend a great deal of time establishing who could have been a contact in the **48 hours prior to the infected student showing symptoms or prior to him/her taking the test if s/he was not showing symptoms**, following the definition below, where a close contact means:

- Direct close contacts – face to face contact with an infected individual **for any length of time**, within 1 metre, including being coughed on, a face to face conversation, or unprotected physical contact (skin-to-skin)
- Proximity contacts – extended close contact (within 1 to 2 metres for more than 15 minutes) with an infected individual
- Travelling in a small vehicle, like a car, with an infected person



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We identify who could have been a contact walking on the way to and from school, on the bus, at break and at lunchtime. We have updated seating plans for each class and we decide who qualifies as a contact in lessons. At the end of that process, we have a list of identified “contacts” who have to self-isolate at home for 14 full days since they were in contact with the infected student.

What to do if you child tests positive for COVID-19

It is crucially important that you contact school should your child test positive for the virus. If your child tests positively for COVID-19 please email this address straight away, no matter what time of day it is or whether it is during the week or at a weekend: COVID@robertsutton.staffs.sch.uk. Your email will come straight to me and I can then begin the process of tracing possible contacts and keeping school safe.

What your child must do if s/he is a confirmed “contact”

If your child is a confirmed contact, then s/he should follow this NHS advice:

- If you have been informed that you are a contact, you must self-isolate at home for 14 days from the date of your last contact with the person who has tested positive for COVID-19.
- Self-isolation means you must stay at home and not leave the house for 14 days.
- It is very important that you follow this advice even if you feel well, as symptoms can take up to 14 days to appear from your last contact with the person who has tested positive for COVID-19.
- Self-isolating in this way will help protect your family, friends, the wider community and the NHS.

Keeping up-to-date with the COVID-19 situation

Things change very quickly with a pandemic. Please check your emails and Firefly regularly for important information, especially appertaining to COVID-19 cases and possible self-isolation. These may well be sent outside of school hours. You can also access details on the COVID Status page on Firefly.

IMPORTANT: Students showing signs of illness

Thank you for the support you are showing the school as we try hard to operate in these difficult conditions.

Remember, the main symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- **A high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- **A new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- **A loss or change to your sense of smell or taste** – this means you have noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.



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Contacting school

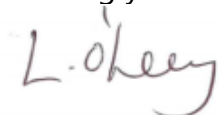
Should you need to contact us, our details are below.

REPORTING A COVID-19 POSITIVE CASE: COVID@robertsutton.staffs.sch.uk

Pastoral Team		
Year Group	Year Leader	Email Address
Year 7	Mrs A McDowall	amanda.mcdowall@robertsutton.staffs.sch.uk
Year 8	Miss E Waters	eliza.waters@robertsutton.staffs.sch.uk
Year 9	Miss J Scott	jade.scott@robertsutton.staffs.sch.uk
Year 10	Miss K Meredith	katie.meredith@robertsutton.staffs.sch.uk
Year 11	Mrs P Harkin	Trish.harkin@robertsutton.staffs.sch.uk
Asst. Headteacher/SENCo/ Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Mrs L Wilson	laura.wilson@robertsutton.staffs.sch.uk
Asst. Headteacher for Behaviour and Ethos	Mr J Heath	jake.heath@robertsutton.staffs.sch.uk

As always should you have any queries or questions regarding the new logistics involved in the reopening of school, please email me directly, Laura.OLeary@robertsutton.staffs.sch.uk

Wishing you all a very happy and restful Christmas.



Laura O'Leary

Acting Headteacher



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