



St Martin-in-the-Fields High School for Girls

11-19 Church of England Academy Founded 1699

Service Compassion Justice Perseverance

'Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid, do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.' Joshua 1:9

Friday 6 November 2020

Dear Families

Second National Lockdown - we remain open with additions to our risk assessment

I do hope that you and your families are keeping well and that you had a good break. We have already completed the first week after returning from half term and with our return, came news of a second lockdown. As you know this began on Thursday 5 November and is expected to last for one month until 2 December 2020. This is a long letter, don't give up, please read to the end!

The Government made clear, however, that it is committed to keeping schools and colleges open so that young people can continue to benefit from attending school for their wellbeing and to ensure their long-term futures. They also reiterated that public examinations should go ahead next summer and have moved them so that they begin 3 weeks later, another important reason for keeping schools open.

We hope to continue to run St Martin's as we usually would unless we are forced to do otherwise because of virus related issues or staff shortages. We have continued to review our school risk assessment against updates from the government. Version 4 of the risk assessment was recently completed, in light of the guidance related to the Local COVID Alert level High. As we are now in National lockdown with further guidance, this is being added to the risk assessment and version 5 will be posted on our website next week.

They also provided clarity for adults and students who fall into the vulnerable categories. Please visit the government website to read the [guidance](#) in full.

Protecting vulnerable students

Students who are deemed to be **clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV)** are recommended to stay at home during the current restrictions. All other students including those who are **clinically vulnerable** and those who live in a household with **clinically extremely vulnerable** people should still attend school.

If your child is in the **CEV** category, the school will make appropriate arrangements for them to continue their education at home. Read the government guidance on [shielding and protecting the vulnerable](#) or contact the school if you have any concerns.

Headteacher Mrs Beverley Stanislaus B.Ed. NPQH

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Registered Number 07984073. Registered office: 155 Tulse Hill, London SW2 3UP

WITH LOVE AND LEARNING



We have a number of vulnerable staff in the school community, or staff who have vulnerable members within their household. Please remind and reinforce our expectations to your child to ensure they adhere to hand and respiratory hygiene, social distancing and keeping within their bubble area. This will help to ensure staff remain safe and well and are able to continue to come to school to teach, and your child is thereby able to come to school to learn.

Face Coverings

Last half term, in accordance with the guidance, students, staff and visitors were advised to wear face coverings in communal areas of the school. We are continuing to enforce this as part of the government's national lock down advice.

We gave students further advice on 'Hands, Face, Space encouraging them to use the hand washing and sanitising facilities in the school, wear a face covering in areas outside the classroom (and in the classroom, if they wished to) and to keep their distance as much as possible and not share items of equipment, food and drink with their peers. We have an enhanced cleaning regime and this is really helping to support keeping the school clean throughout the day.

We distributed a number of blue badges to students who are exempt from wearing a face covering. If they are not exempt, please ensure your child has a face covering. I distributed a number of face coverings today but it is important that your child remembers their own and considers that for now, it is a compulsory part of their uniform!

Unlike many other schools, we were fortunate not to be hugely impacted by the virus last half term. The majority of students and staff remained well and were in school. Health and safety is of paramount importance to us and we stay positive and optimistic that if everyone follows the guidance, our St Martin's community will remain as safe as possible and the consequence of disruption to learning by being out of school will be reduced.

Ventilation

A measure that all schools have introduced to reduce the risk of transmission of coronavirus in classrooms is increased ventilation. This means that the windows will be open in classrooms at all times to reduce the concentration of any virus in the air. In the event that it is very cold, students will be permitted to wear their outdoor coats and scarves in classrooms. The rules on hoodies or similar applies. They are not permitted.

COVID-19 what to look for

Ensuring that we are as safe as possible will need everyone's help and we ask for your support too. Here is a reminder of the COVID-19 symptoms to look out for:

- A high temperature
- A new continuous cough (this means coughing a lot, for more than an hour, or three or more coughing episodes in 24 hours)
- A loss or change to sense of smell or taste (this means they cannot smell or taste anything or things smell or taste different)

Please do not send your child to school if they, or anyone in your household, has symptoms or tests positive. They should not come to school whilst they are waiting for the test result, even if they feel well. Only if the test is negative should they return to school, otherwise they remain at home and self isolate according to the [NHS guidance](#).

Further information and government guidance for parents [What parents and carers need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges in the autumn term](#)

Lockdown rules ([New National Restrictions from 5 November 2020](#))

The government has made it clear that the privilege of coming to school does not mean that students are exempt from lockdown rules.

A reminder of our existing expectations and the lockdown expectations are that students:

- must not be in groups and must go straight home immediately after school finishes
- wear a face covering on public transport and in places where social distancing is not possible
- wash and sanitise hands regularly
- not hang around with friends or visit each other's houses
- only be with one other person outside of their home for some exercise

Free School Meals

I wrote to you on 29 October to inform you that if your child was in receipt of free school meals you would receive communication from a company called Wonde asking you to make a choice for vouchers for a particular supermarket. You would have received communication from them by now hopefully already redeemed your voucher for £15.00. In the summer we did have many families who did not redeem their vouchers. If you encounter a problem with this, please contact us at the school.

Staff who left St Martin's

Last half term a number of staff left us to further their career or pursue a different pathway. A big thank you to Ms Ryan, Ms Ferguson, Ms Bennett and Ms Cameron for all their years here, their contributions and the support they gave to the students at St Martin's.

I know you will want to join me in thanking all the staff at St Martin's for keeping on going, for their hard work and their commitment to your children's education. As a christian community, we continue to put our faith, hope and trust in God and ask for wisdom and strength as we navigate these difficult times.

You have reached the end of this lengthy letter, thank you for staying with me! We recognise that this will be a worrying time for you and your families but, be assured we will do everything we can to ensure that your child is learning, is safe and happy in school.

As always, thank you for your continued support and please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any questions or concerns.

Yours sincerely



Beverley Stanislaus
Headteacher