

Mount St. Joseph

"A community of Learners, Believers and Friends"

08 December 2020

Dear parent and carers,

As we approach the end of what has been a very difficult and challenging year, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our parents and carers for all your support and your patience throughout this term. We fully appreciate that it can be worrying and frustrating when students are asked to self-isolate, however I do hope that your child has benefitted from the home learning package of Show My Homework and the Team live lessons staff have offered. Please be reassured, the health and safety of our community is paramount over this time and we continually consult and follow the advice given by the government and Public Health England.

Over the last few months, I have seen some fantastic learning in action; our students returned to school in September with an excellent attitude to learning despite the restrictions of COVID-19 and the new routines. I would like to thank all our students and all our staff for all their hard work, commitment and support- what a wonderful MSJ community we have!

After Christmas, all students will continue to follow the same routines established over the last few months, including entering and leaving school through separate entrances and exits, being taught in year group bubbles within allocated zones and we will continue with separate year group breaks and lunchtimes.

As you are aware, Year 8 and Year 10 have been finishing the school day slightly later to avoid leaving at the same time as Year 7 and 9. We are now in a position to end the school day at the normal school time for Year 8 and 10, therefore following the Christmas break both year groups will finish at 2.50pm.

Thank you for all your support with the wearing of face coverings in school. All students have been informed about the importance of face coverings and they are all aware that face coverings must be worn in all communal areas and on the corridors. Please could you continue to support by checking that your child has a face mask and that they bring them to school each day.

End of term arrangements - Friday 18th December 2020:

We would like to advise all parents that the school will close **on Friday, 18th December 2020**. As in previous years, students will finish school early on the last day of term - around lunch time. In order to ensure that all students leave school in a safe and controlled manner, we will be staggering the times each year group leaves, please see below for each year group's leaving time:

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Headteacher: Mrs A Devany



| Year | Finishing Time on Friday 18 th December 2020 |
|------|---|
| 11 | 12.15pm |
| 10 | 12.20pm |
| 7 | 12.30pm |
| 9 | 12.30pm |
| 8 | 12.40pm |

Please ensure that your child has made arrangements to make a safe journey home as there will be no school buses at the close of day. The school reopens for the start of the spring term on **Monday, 4th January 2021 at 8.30am for all students - via their usual entrances.**

Christmas events and charities:

As part of BOSCEP (Bolton and Wigan Schools Catholic Education Partnership), we have worked with the other two Bolton Catholic secondary schools and eighteen Catholic primaries to raise money for Urban Outreach in Bolton and The Brick in Wigan.

Leading up to Christmas, the school will be involved with the food collections for a local charity that was organised by our former Headteacher Sister Barbara. We will be collecting tins of food and other items - we are aiming to surpass last year's collection of over 1,000 tins. If you are able to, please send a donation of a tin of food with your child into school by **Friday 18th December**; items will be collected during form time. Thank you to those who have already supported this charity.

We will also be supporting the Christmas jumper appeal on **Friday 18th December**. If your child would like to wear a Christmas jumper, we would ask them to bring in a contribution of tins of food on this day to donate to the destitution project.

Arrangements for adverse weather

As we look to the New Year, it is best to think about our arrangements for adverse weather. We have only closed on two days in the last ten years for adverse weather, so any alteration to normal business would be very rare. However, it is best to be clear about how we will communicate so that everyone is as well informed as possible on what are often stressful mornings. When we need to close, a 'weather warning – school closed' will appear on the school website from 7.30am. You can also expect an email and text around 7.30am to confirm the situation.

In any event, do please make safe choices about travel – in most cases of bad weather school gradually fills up during the first part of the morning as students complete their journeys.

During the cold winter season students may wear the grey pullover under the school blazer; the jumper is available from the school uniform suppliers. Students may also wear a black coat to and from school. In the event of snow the pavements are slippery and we would advise

students to wear appropriate foot wear to and from school however, please note black school shoes must be worn in the building.

Year 11 exams and reports

Year 11 parents and carers will shortly be receiving their child's full written reports from their subject teachers. There will be an opportunity to discuss your child's progress and attainment with their teachers at the virtual Year 11 Parents' evening on **Thursday 28th January 2021**. You should be receiving a link to our new online parents' evening system- School Cloud.

End of term reports for Year 7-10

You will be shortly receiving your child's report for term one in the next few days; parents and carers of Year 10 students will have recently received their child's report via email. There will also be a newsletter sent to each of the year groups celebrating the successes of this term and outlining key dates and the events that your child's year group will be involved in in the next term.

Parent App

We are pleased to inform you that we have now launched the MSJ SIMS Parent App. You will receive an email later today to invite you to download the app. This is free to download and is compatible for both Android and Apple devices. It will provide you with instant access to your child's attainment, attendance, timetable, term dates, newsletters, achievement, behaviour and other message notifications, while the dashboard will give a clear overview of your child's school life. Additionally, you will be able to view and submit consent forms, the current contact details we hold, report absences and receive secure documents. We will also use the app to send targeted messages via push notifications so you will not be bombarded with messages that are not relevant. Paper copies of letters will no longer be posted home, MSJ SIMS Parent App will be our method of communication, along with the emails. This approach will help reduce the risk of COVID transmission and ensure all messages reach you when we need them to.

For news and updates on the school, events and activities please visit the school website at: www.msj.bolton.sch.uk. The holiday pattern for 2021/22 is now on the school website (see also attachment). There is also information for Year 11 and home learning support and information if your child has to isolate. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the school or email reception@msj.bolton.sch.uk

May I take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and to wish you and your family a peaceful, holy Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Devany
Headteacher