



St Mary's and St John's CE School

"With God, all things are possible" (Matthew 19:26)

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Wisdom Service Hope

Principal: Martin Serrão BA, MEd (Camb)

6th January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

It seems particularly pertinent at this time to be mindful that 40 days after the Nativity of Christ we prepare to celebrate our final festival of light during the '*darkest time of the year*'; Candlemas! 2021 has indeed begun with continued disruption and uncertainty which we will do our utmost to respond to appropriately in order to ensure that our students are fully supported both academically and emotionally.

Critical worker and vulnerable children

Following this week's lockdown announcement, SMSJ will remain open for the children of Critical workers and Vulnerable children through to half term, Friday 12th February.

Teaching staff will be supporting our Critical worker and Vulnerable children in school to access the same learning activities as their peers who are undertaking remote learning. Learning Support Assistants will also be supporting our Critical worker and Vulnerable children in school

Dependent on numbers, new bubbles may be formed. We will be monitoring this provision and will inform you of any changes over the half-term.

Those children who do not fall into the two categories above will continue to learn remotely until Friday 12th February. Definitions for these groups can be found [here](#).

Please contact the school office, office@smsj.london if your child/children meet these criteria and you wish to apply for a place. Please clearly mark your email with '**Primary / Secondary Critical Worker provision**' in the subject line.

Remote learning

We are very conscious that managing home learning presents particular challenges and so we are following a blended programme of live lessons and distance learning which will provide your family greater flexibility.

Teachers will also be facilitating remote learning and the remote learning day will follow as closely as realistic, your child's timetable. Learning Support Assistants will also be supporting vulnerable children remotely.

For Years 1 to Years 13, work will be set on Teams. Teachers have made swift progress in using this platform and many sessions may be delivered live, although to support both you and staff with work/life balance we do not expect all sessions to be delivered this way, some may be recorded. Having listened to your feedback from the Summer 2020, we believe that this will give families flexibility to manage the learning time especially if access to devices or workspaces need to be shared. Nursery and Reception sessions will be pre-recorded and delivered through the Tapestry platform.

Live sessions may be recorded for the class to refer back to or for those who were unable to attend the session; these recordings are for school use only. In most circumstances, all students are expected to have their cameras off but

students who do not wish to be recorded **must** turn off their camera during the session. Secondary students are all required to abide by our '[Live Lessons Expectations](#)'.

Please remind your child that they must only attend their own class session not anyone else's and they will only be admitted if they are using their school email account. Students using personal email accounts will not be admitted and will be expected to catch up later.

Teachers will make it clear when work needs to be submitted and Primary and Secondary subjects will follow their usual feedback protocols.

Tips, advice, guides and resources to help keep your child safe online can be accessed via the following [link](#).

Free School Meals

Families eligible for free school meals will have received a letter this week which confirms that food vouchers have been replaced with Food Hampers that will need to be collected from school. Please check your junk mailbox if you have not received this by Monday. If you have any further queries, please email office@smsj.london with Free School Meal as the subject.

Cancelled Examinations

We continue to wait for detailed guidance from the DfE and Ofqual in respect to terminal examinations for our Y11 and Y13 students following the Minister for Education's presentation in the House of Commons today. However, we are making preparations similar to last summer in readiness.

Currently, Students have been told they still need to keep up to date with the work and any assessments as it will keep their study skills sharp for when they progress to the next stage of their learning next year.

Students will continue to be taught the remaining curriculum and potentially extension or bridging work to ensure they are best prepared for the next step in their learning journey.

We will be expecting them to meet the usual high standards of engagement with learning. We will not give up on them so that they can avoid the trap of giving up themselves. As parents you will play a vital role in keeping their spirits up at this uncertain time.

Lateral Flow Testing

We will continue to prepare to conduct Lateral Flow Testing of staff and secondary Critical worker and Vulnerable children in school and hope to have this in place by w/c 11th January once we have received all the necessary equipment and training.

Communication

In line with government guidance there will be skeleton staff on site during the school day with most working remotely from home. Administrative Education Support Staff will operate a rota system in the reception offices on each campus over the period of the lockdown. Please continue to access our website for updates. Our Site Team will continue to maintain our campus buildings and services.

Safeguarding

If you have any concerns about access to learning or welfare, then please contact your child's Head of Year. If you have a concern about the safety of a child from SMSJ, then please email;

Simon Atkinson (Head of Primary) Primary Designated Safeguarding Lead: s.atkinson@smsj.london

Sarah Pittaway (Head of Secondary) Secondary Designated Safeguarding Lead: s.pittaway@smsj.london

I am extremely grateful to our staff who have worked so hard during the Christmas holidays to enable us to be so well-prepared for the start of the Spring Term and to our parents for your support and understanding as we hope and pray for resilience and faith that we will navigate these challenges safely.

Yours faithfully,



Martin Serrão
Principal