



15th May, 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Coronavirus update 13

Welcome to another weekly update to keep you informed about what is happening at St Margaret's during our 'repurposing' period.

Possible partial re-opening in June

Following on from my letter earlier this week, we are continuing to consider how best to provide some support for our Year 10 and Year 12 students – although it is already very clear that we will **not** be re-opening for students in these year groups on Monday 1st June, and if/when we do re-open for them, it will **not** be on a business-as-usual, everyone-is-in-full-time basis. This is because the safety of our students and staff has always been, and will always be, our top priority – so we will not open any more fully until it is safe to do so.

I am pleased to note that education leaders in the City agree with that stance. Please find attached a letter from the Director of Children's Services which helpfully outlines Liverpool's position. (Please note, though, that news of our decision to open at half-term clearly hadn't reached Mr Reddy's office when he wrote his letter! His line that "*All settings will be closed for the half-term holiday*" isn't true for our Academy, as we will continue to provide childcare for vulnerable and key workers' children as we have done throughout the lock-down period).

On-site childcare

On the subject of our on-site provision, I can report that numbers are continuing to rise – from an average of 8.9 students in each day last week to 9.4 students each day this week. This week some of our boys have continued to work on materials to support our incoming Year 6 students, as well as taking part in a variety of physical activities.

As I say each week, if you qualify for a place in our onsite childcare provision and would now like to take one up (even if only on a part-time basis), you would be more than welcome to do so! Please just let me know in advance at scbrierley@stmargaretsacademy.com

On-line learning

Dr Manwaring, one of our online learning team, writes:

"Our Year 11 Bridging courses started this Monday and we now have 17 subjects live:

- *Art*
- *Biology*
- *BTEC Engineering*
- *BTEC Hospitality*
- *BTEC IT*
- *Business*
- *Chemistry*
- *Computer Science*
- *DT Product Design*
- *English Languages*
- *English Literature*
- *Mathematics*
- *Photography*
- *Politics*
- *Physics*
- *Psychology*
- *Religious Studies*

“These courses are all available through Show My Homework (‘SMHW’). In addition, Sports and Exercise Science course materials have been emailed to pupils registered for that course and will be transitioning across to SMHW very shortly.

“If your son has not signed up to any Bridging Courses yet please email me at emanwaring@stmargaretsacademy.com and we can add them to the classes. If your son has registered, but is unable to access his courses through SMHW please email the IT support desk at ITsupport@stmargaretsacademy.com so we can sort out any technical issues.

“All pupils are set up with accounts on Century Learning to continue practicing GCSE English and Maths which will benefit them in their KS5 studies and beyond. We are not setting specific assignments to complete in Century as we feel pupils will want to focus on the aspects that are most important to their continuing studies – so the topics are self-directed. We have asked pupils to spend 30 minutes per day on English and 30 mins on Maths. If it suits, this time can be rolled up into longer time blocks, providing 2½ hours’ study in each of these two subjects is achieved each week.”

Safeguarding

Dr Silverstone, our Director of Pastoral Care, writes:

“Given the amount of time that students have been away from school and that children have been isolated from their friends, it is inevitable that there have been cases of cyber-bullying all across the country. Should you have any concerns regarding issues of cyber-bullying involving any St Margaret’s pupils, please contact the relevant Head of Year by e-mail, or let the school team know at safeguarding@stmargaretsacademy.com and we will do our best to support you. I would also point you towards the NSPCC resources on bullying and cyber-bullying in particular, which can be found at <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/bullying-and-cyberbullying/>.

“Second, one of our colleagues from the local council has passed us details of a short survey being run by Healthwatch Liverpool who work with local health and care services to make sure they are working as best they can for the people who use them. Their survey is designed to find out how coronavirus/COVID-19 has affected you or your family members, so that they can let health and care services in Liverpool know what they’re doing well during the pandemic, and where people feel their care and communication could be improved. The survey can be found at <http://www.healthwatchliverpool.co.uk/coronavirus-survey?fbclid=IwAR3SKetVqBHS5AQQ-djYKSSZOOBYQUFRNIwXAJqeq2Rvu4OzOsXYjKLBDsgs>.

“Finally, may I just remind you again that if you have any questions of a pastoral or safeguarding nature and want to contact us for advice, guidance or simply to ask any questions you have, please contact us at safeguarding@stmargaretsacademy.com”.

Ascension Day

Thursday 21st May is Ascension Day, the day when Christians remember that after his resurrection, Jesus ‘ascended’ back into heaven. Had we been in school, we would certainly have marked this important date in the Christian calendar in our Assemblies and form worship – so I wonder if I might encourage you to mark the date at home instead?

You could do this by looking up the story of Jesus’ ascension (it can be found in Luke 24:44–53), maybe by creating some artwork in response, or by using the Ascension Day collect: *“Almighty God, whose blessed Son our Saviour Jesus Christ ascended far above all heavens that he might*

fill all things: Mercifully give us faith to perceive that, according to his promise, he abides with his Church on earth, even to the end of the ages; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen.”

Free School Meals

We have been advised that **the Edenred voucher system will not be in operation over the half-term break**, so no vouchers will be issued during the week beginning Monday 25th May. Instead, Liverpool City Council will be providing £10 supermarket vouchers using the same channels that they did over Easter. I hope to be able to provide more details about this next week.

In the meantime, please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any problems with the Edenred vouchers – there do seem to have been an unfortunate number of hiccups along the way!

Pedal for PPE

I understand that the St Hilda's PPE 'hub' (which involves several schools in our locality) is one of 335 or so school-based PPE-production hubs around the country – and that, having produced around 7,000 items altogether, the hub in the top 10 for production nationally! St Margaret's contribution to that impressive total currently stands at 1,867.

This time next week I'll be half-way through my 70-mile round-trip cycle-to-work-and-home-again fundraising drive to support the work our Design Technology Technician, Mr Taylor, and his colleagues in other schools have been doing. Please don't expect a particularly eloquent Update next week – I'm not sure I'll be in a fit state to write anything especially meaningful! I continue to be deeply grateful to all those who have sponsored me and must point out that it's not too late to do so – the link is [here](#). And for anyone who may be concerned, please be assured that Brierley cycling is a lycra-free zone!

With best wishes for a peaceful weekend,

Yours faithfully



Stephen Brierley
Principal.



ENQUIRIES: Steve Reddy,
Director,
Children & Young People's Service.

OUR REF: SR/RB/JJ
DATE:

Dear Parents and Carers

Liverpool Position on School Re-openings

I am writing to explain Liverpool's position on the re-opening of schools. I know that many of you were greatly encouraged by the Mayor's recent position on the re-opening of schools.

I have since written to all headteachers asking that, from 1 June, Liverpool schools open for key workers' children¹ and vulnerable children² only. **Schools will not re-open to any other pupils at this stage.**

We know some employers will be encouraging people to return to work. But most schools will not be able to open for any other children on 1 June.

Safe Space Hubs will close on Friday 22 May. Children who have been attending hubs will return to their home schools on Monday 1 June. **All settings will be closed for the half-term holiday to children.** Our hubs have been a real success story. I am sure you would

¹ NHS staff; social workers, care workers, health and social care staff and those required to maintain the sector; teachers, specialist education professionals and nursery staff; staff essential to the operation of the justice system; staff involved in the management of the deceased; administrative staff in local and central government essential to the delivery of the COVID-19 response or the delivery of essential public services, such as the payment of benefits. This includes government agencies and arms-length bodies; staff delivering essential public services such as payment of benefits; staff involved in the distribution of food or other key goods; police and police support staff; fire and rescue staff and support staff; transport workers; utilities workers; probation staff; IT staff necessary to support Covid-19 response; payment providers; waste disposal service presumably including refuse collection; armed forces personnel; MoD civilian staff and contractors; National Crime Agency; border security; national security staff; religions and charity staff; journalists and broadcasters; university staff working in a research role to help fight Covid-19 to the list of eligible workers.

² This includes children with an EHCP who have had a recent risk assessment.

want to join me in thanking everyone across the city who has helped ensure they have run so well.

Our guiding principle is that schools can only re-open to other pupils when it is safe to do so and not a moment before. Only once we can be sure that schools are safe for both children and staff will they be able to open to more children. The safety of your child, and of our staff, is our top priority.

We will not be pressuring anyone to send their child to school since you know your children and personal situation best. Once you have all the information, you will be able to make an informed decision. The government has made it clear they will not be fining parents for not sending children into school during this term. However, if you are supported by a social worker and your social worker advises that your child needs to attend school, it is important you follow this advice.

Some parents have asked me when schools may fully re-open. This will vary from school to school. Each headteacher has to rigorously assess the risks of fully re-opening for their particular school. The size and layout of the school building, and the availability of staff, will affect their assessments. It will be the case that the schools will do it differently. Your child's headteacher will be in touch with you in due course.

I know that the last two months have not been easy. But in troubled times our city never fails to come together and show itself at its best. Parents, carers and families have been a deep source of comfort to our children – even as we have all been dealing with new situations. Thank you so much.

I think many of us have grown further in our admiration for those who work and teach in our nurseries, schools and colleges. We now recognize even more the important role nurseries, schools and colleges play in our lives, and in our communities. They are much more than places of learning! They have become care providers, meal voucher distributors, PPE manufacturers, providers of sanitary products – in short, they continue to be the beating heart of local communities.

But these are unsettling times. We must all keep looking out for our children, and how they are reacting. We must all watch out for their emotional and mental health needs, even if they seem to be coping well for now. My team is working with many professionals across the city to ensure the right support is in place in schools for everyone who needs it.

There is no guarantee to what the 'new normal' will look like in our schools. But I want you and your child to know that when they do return to school, my colleagues and I are working hard to ensure they return to an even better place than when they left. I am unflinching in my commitment that your children – Liverpool's present and future – get the best possible care and education.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Reddy', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Steve Reddy

Director for Children's and Young Peoples Services

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