



ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S SCHOOL



18 March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

Thank you for all your support and patience as we try to understand the ever-changing Government advice on Coronavirus and manage the school in a safe way for everyone whilst doing our utmost to ensure the Government's guidelines are followed as far as possible.

Unfortunately, since we updated you on Monday, we are now facing a significantly larger number of staff now absent from school due to the new guidelines on self-isolation. This now means that regrettably we cannot continue to keep the school open for all year groups every day.

Therefore, for tomorrow, Thursday 19 March, and Friday 20 March the school will be closed for Years 8 and 9, and students in these years should study at home. Work is being set on Show My Homework (SMHW). Our expectations are that students:

- Take responsibility for their own learning;
- Check SMHW and their school emails daily for notifications, instructions and feedback;
- Spend a minimum of 3 to 4 hours a day on lesson activities and tasks set by their teachers;
- Complete all tasks on paper or online as required and meet any deadlines given;
- Engage in any other learning activities their teachers have prepared, including extended tasks;
- Read for a minimum of 30 minutes a day;
- Apply the transferrable skills they have developed and be resilient and resourceful;
- Show us what they can achieve!

We will then review the situation over the next few days in light of any further guidance and staff absence and update you further by the end of the week. If we are able to, our plan is to rotate year groups that are not in school next week, whilst keeping Year 11 and 13 in school.

If you are a key worker and have difficulties with childcare as a result of our closure, please make contact with us and we will do our best to see how we can support you.

For your information, below is a summary of the latest guidance in terms of self-isolation, and we would ask that you read this and follow the guidance given. School staff are not medically qualified to advise on students' particular circumstances and are doing their best. Therefore, if you do receive a call from school to advise or clarify situations, please understand that it is done with the best of intentions.

- For households with more than one person – you must stay at home for 14 days if any one person in your household has symptoms of COVID-19.
- Individuals are asked to self-isolate for 7 days from the onset of COVID-19 symptoms but any other individuals in the household are now asked to self-isolate for 14 days from that moment as well.
- If other members of your household develop symptoms, however mild, at any time during the 14 days, they must not leave the home for 7 days from when symptoms (a high temperature or a new continuous cough, however mild) started.

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- The Government has taken the further measure of asking whole households to isolate because it is likely that people living with others will infect each other or be infected already. Staying at home for 14 days will greatly reduce the overall amount of infection the household could pass on to others in the community.
- For those who remain well, are under 70 or do not have an underlying health condition, they are advised to limit their social contact where possible, including using less public transport, working at home and considering not going to pubs, restaurants, theatres and bars.
- For those who are over 70, have an underlying health condition or are pregnant, they are strongly advised against these activities and to significantly limit face-to-face interaction with friends and family if possible.
- The most important thing individuals can do to protect themselves remains washing their hands more often, for at least 20 seconds, with soap and water. Make sure you cough or sneeze into a tissue, put it in a bin and wash your hands.
- The awareness campaign also reiterates the importance of seeking help online by visiting [NHS.UK/coronavirus](https://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus) to check your symptoms and follow the medical advice, rather than visiting your GP. It also urges people with any symptoms to avoid contact with older and more vulnerable people.
- Only if symptoms become worse should people use the NHS 111 service. To ensure the phone service is readily available to those who need it, where possible people should use the 111 website rather than calling.

Thank you again for all the support you have given us as we manage this challenging and continually developing situation.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Mortimore', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Ms J Mortimore
Headteacher