



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

11-19 Church of England Academy Founded 1699

Service Compassion Justice Perseverance

Friday 12 February 2021

Dear Families

I am writing this letter to you as we approach the end of the first half of the spring term in what has been a very different start to school for 2021. I apologise in advance for this long letter. I have written with subheadings to make it easier to read, so please stay with me until the end!

This half term we have received a number of calls from families to inform us about the sad loss of a loved one. Our thoughts and prayers are with you in your time of grief and sorrow. Please do contact us if there is anything we can do to support and please visit our [bereavement section](#) on our website for organisations who can also offer support at this difficult time. You will also find resources to support young people as they grieve.

This half term has flown by and as yet, we still do not have any details on when schools will return and what this will look like. Whether there will be a staggered start with exam groups prioritised, or whether everybody will come back at the same time. It is expected that the government will release details of the plans for schools on 22 February with the view to return from 8 March 2021. However, what we do know is that there will be at least three more weeks of remote learning and potentially longer for some year groups. We continue to look at our remote curriculum and pastoral programme to ensure we can provide good teaching and support for students' mental health and wellbeing.

As a result of the government's laptop scheme we have been able to distribute 100 devices to students. We have received notification of a further 30 being delivered to us in the next week or so. Please contact the school if you need support with equipment or data, we will endeavour to help.

DfE Mobile Data Scheme Extended

The government scheme in association with network providers has been extended and you may be eligible to apply for increasing data allowances on your mobile device to support your child with their school work. We can request help to increase mobile data allowances for children and young people who: do not have fixed broadband at home; cannot afford additional data for their devices to access educational resources; are experiencing disruption to their face-to-face education.

Please complete the google form if you consider that you meet the criteria. Prior to completing this form, please read the privacy notice which you can access from the link below. This gives you information on privacy and how your details will be processed. [How we look after personal information for the Increasing Children's Mobile Data scheme - Get help with technology - GOV.UK](#)

Apply for the upgrade to mobile data using the google form [here](#).

As parents you cannot apply yourselves, schools have to make applications on your behalf for your child. The packages are limited and not all networks will offer data to all payment plans. You can read about the offers available from each network provider by clicking on the link [Telling them about their offer – Guide to collecting mobile information](#)

Success Beyond School - Free Webinars for Parents

Please [click here](#) to see the flyer about a termly series of events designed to give parents insider knowledge about the industries young people aspire to break into; delivered by top professionals from those fields. You will be able to register for webinars from the flyer.

Wellbeing Wednesday

The constant screen time and the intensity of being online has impacted all of us. After half term we will introduce 'Wellbeing Wednesday' an afternoon where students can work offline on a series of wellbeing activities. Some of the activities will start online and then students will be asked to reflect independently. Please contact Ms Pieroulli, Assistant Headteacher, if you have any further questions.

Headteacher Mrs Beverley Stanislaus B.Ed. NPQH

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WITH LOVE AND LEARNING



Government Mass Covid-19 Testing Programme in Schools

I wrote to you yesterday with an update to the mass testing in school and the changes to two elements of this testing regime. Although you do not have to give permission for your child to be tested, it is however strongly advised that you do, for their safety and wellbeing, and that of others. Please read the updated information on our dedicated page [COVID-19 testing](#) on our website.

Contact Tracing during February half-term

The government made the following statement regarding contact tracing during half term .

Schools continue to play an important role in contact tracing for those pupils and staff who continue to attend their school. We recognise the challenges of this responsibility during holidays. Given limited numbers on-site, we expect contact tracing activity to be reduced but this remains vitally important in the continued national effort to limit the spread of the virus.

- Where pupils or staff still attending their school test positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) during the holidays, having developed symptoms more than 48 hours since being in school, schools are not required to take any action. Staff, parents and carers should follow contact tracing instructions provided by NHS Test and Trace.
- Where pupils or staff still attending their school test positive having developed symptoms within 48 hours of being in school, the school is asked to assist in identifying close contacts and advising self-isolation, as the individual may have been infectious whilst in school.
- Staff responsible for contact tracing are not asked to be on-call at all times and may designate a limited period in the day to receive notification of positive cases and advise close contacts to self-isolate
- There will be no pupil contact tracing beyond **Thursday 18 February**.

If your case meets the criteria in **bullet point 2**, which is, your child has tested positive **within the first 48 hours of being in school**, use the dedicated St Martin's coronavirus email address covid@stmartins.academy and you will be contacted. Alternatively you can call the coronavirus dedicated mobile number **07753 498688** however, email is preferable. Please also follow the NHS covid guidance for testing and self isolation as well as contacting the school.

Please be aware that if we receive confirmation of a positive case, we may have to get in touch with families of a particular year group for track and trace if your child is identified as a school close contact. Please refer to [Covid-19 updates](#) on how a close contact is identified. As a close contact, your child will then be required to self isolate in accordance with government guidelines.

Free School Meals

Thanks to Lambeth LA they will provide vouchers for free school meals during February half term. This includes an additional £5.00 totalling £20.00 for the week for each eligible child. For further information, read [Lambeth's Winter Grant Guidance](#)

Unfortunately, we are not able to issue the vouchers via the same company that we have been using for the government scheme. So for one week only, we will be reverting back to using Wonde. Please look out for communication from them as you have in the past. After half term, we will go back to using Edenred. Apologies for this inconvenience.

A reminder that our onsite learning for students in the critical groups is **closed for half term** and will resume again on **Monday 22 February**. This will be an opportunity for all students to 'stay off screen' and have a rest this half term.

Thank you for your ongoing support and kind words, they have kept us going! Please keep in touch with all that we are doing by visiting the latest news on our website and looking at our weekly showcase of students learning in 'Simply the Best! 2. Look out for our Chinese New Year and 'Valentine's Day Bake-off' videos.

Wishing you a peaceful and restful half term.

Blessings



Beverley Stanislaus
Headteacher