



# St Catherine's Catholic School

**Arts College with  
Academy Status**

A charitable company limited by guarantee, registered in England  
and Wales, company number 07694573.

Registered office:  
St. Catherine's Catholic School  
Watling Street, Bexleyheath, Kent, DA6 7QJ

Headteacher: Yvonne Connolly BA (Hons) PGCE NPQH

16<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

I wanted to write to you regarding your daughter's attendance at this time. I am unable to respond to all of the people who have rung or emailed.

I understand that this is a concerning time for everyone and one of great uncertainty. I wanted to confirm that we still have no confirmed cases of Corona Virus at the school and the school remains open as usual.

There has been no indication about when or if we will close. This information, should it arrive, will come directly from Public Health England. We are, as I identified in my previous letter, planning for this eventuality, and this may happen at short notice. At the moment the advice is still that we should not close schools. The reason given for this is that if the government introduce this next stage too early, the measures will not protect us at the time of greatest risk but could have a huge social impact.

I am receiving a number of emails and phone calls asking me to check about pupils or stories that have been passed on regarding people who have Corona Virus. As with all large institutions, there will be people who are off school or work unwell, especially at this time of year and I can only trust the reasons they give me. The advice given to schools is given to them. I have to rely on you as parents to communicate with me should these absences be of concern. With a rapid rate of transmission that is widely reported in the press, you will understand that I cannot contact all parents or children who are unwell.

The advice to schools remains the same, to wash your hands more often, for at least 20 seconds, with soap and water and make sure you cough or sneeze into a tissue if you do so, put it in a bin and wash your hands. Facilities are available to girls to do this.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>

The advice from the NHS is that anyone with an elevated temperature (above 37.8 degrees) and a new continuous cough should stay at home. The advice is that you should not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital, but should use the 111 advice line if you feel you cannot cope with your symptoms at home or your condition gets worse. <https://www.nhs.uk/>

We have received advice from Bexley about how to consider pupil absence during this time that will be helpful to you. I do take your concerns seriously and will do all I can to reduce any risk to your daughters but I cannot authorise the absence of a child whose parent has decided to isolate them against advice. Absence from school will be detrimental and disruptive to your daughter's education if it is not necessary. Work will be emailed for illness as below, but I cannot email work for those who are acting against advice.

Tel: 01322 556333

Fax: 01322 555919

Email: [admin@stccc.co.uk](mailto:admin@stccc.co.uk)





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## School Absence Coding Guidance

Scenario 1 Child not ill, but has been isolated for valid medical reasons, e.g. They have a compromised immune system or underlying health condition.	This would be coded as exceptional leave of absence
Scenario 2 Child not ill, but has been isolated in accordance with Public Health England advice	This would be coded as exceptional leave of absence
Scenario 3 Child is not ill, but parent has opted to isolate against current Public Health England advice	This would be coded as absence from school without authorisation
Scenario 5 Child ill for whatever reason	This would be coded for authorised absence

I am sorry I am unable to give you more definitive news, but I ask you to support us by not sending children who are obviously unwell into school, but also by considering the information above, and seeking advice where necessary.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Penny Johnson  
Associate Headteacher

Tel: 01322 556333

Fax: 01322 555919

Email: [admin@stccg.co.uk](mailto:admin@stccg.co.uk)

