



ST. MARY'S SECONDARY SCHOOL

HOLY FAITH CONVENT, GLASNEVIN, DUBLIN 11



28th March 2020

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

We hope you are all keeping safe and well during these unprecedented times. We have been updating you to the best of our ability through our Website, our school App, our Twitter feed and by text and we would like you to know that the school can still be contacted through the main line **01-8374413** which has been diverted for the duration of this emergency. The most recent news regarding schools was released by the Minister for Education Joe McHugh on Tuesday 24th March stating that 'all schools, pre-schools and further and higher education settings will remain closed to students until 19 April 2020'. This is to support efforts to contain the spread of Covid-19 and is in line with the advice of the National Public Health Emergency Team.

More serious lockdown measures were announced by the Taoiseach Leo Varadkar yesterday evening. We had been opening the school to facilitate students and parents who needed to collect books and had planned two more dates to accommodate this but last night we were directed by our management body to instruct the school community that **school is closed between now and 12th April**. We would encourage students to share resources online and help each other to access any required materials. Teachers may also be able to help by sending screen shots of relevant work if students request it. We will reassess the situation after 12th April and keep you informed. We would also like to remind you that free online books are available from CJ Fallon and Edco and information can be accessed on our website at <https://www.stmaryshfglasnevin.com/free-online-books-from-cj-fallon/>.

Since the school closed on 12th March remote teaching has been happening. Teachers are endeavouring to stick to the timetable and are delivering innovative and creative classes to their students. We are deeply indebted to them and acknowledge this massive undertaking while balancing their work and home commitments. On your behalf I would like to take this opportunity to thank them sincerely for their dedication and devotion to our students.

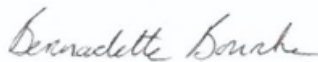
All students received their Office 365 account details – username and password – before the school closed. Over the last two weeks we have contacted any students who might have missed this or whose details might have been inaccurate. We are fairly confident that all students now have the login details to access the Microsoft Teams that teachers have set up as their teaching platform. If for any reason your daughter's account is not working and she cannot join the teams please link in with Ms Devaney and she will sort out the problem. Her email address is fdevaney@stmaryshfg.ie. We are delighted with the manner in which most students have engaged with online teaching and learning and with the progress that is being

reported. We would urge the few who have resisted engaging to please join the teams and enjoy this new and interactive learning experience.

While education is important we are acutely aware that the health and wellbeing of our school community is of paramount importance and we are conscious of the difficulties that some of you are suffering due to the restrictions that have been put in place. We are mindful that employment circumstances may have changed in some households due to the Covid-19 situation to the extent that some families might be experiencing unforeseen difficulties. The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection which provides funding for our school breakfast has confirmed that funding to schools will continue, and food parcels may be available to families who are experiencing need at this time. If your family has been hit badly by the measures in place could you please email Ms Bourke at bbourke@stmaryshfg.ie and we could put you on a list to receive whatever support is available.

Our thoughts and prayers are with you all and especially those affected by the Coronavirus and we urge all our students to play their part – to maintain social and physical distancing as instructed by the HSE in order to curb the spread of Covid-19, and to stay safe and well.

Yours faithfully,



Bernadette Bourke
Principal



Mary O'Donnell
Deputy Principal



Frances Devaney
Deputy Principal

