

St. Gerard's Catholic Primary and Nursery School



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Dear Parents and Carers

Firstly, I hope you are all well. Here is some further useful information, which may be relevant to you and your family. Please keep in mind that if your circumstances change you may be eligible for Free School Meals and you can do this through the Halton Borough Council Website. If you require support/advice, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Take Care
Kind Regards

Mr Landrum
Headteacher

IF YOU NEED SUPPORT

The council is working with Halton and St Helens Voluntary and Community Action to coordinate support to help the most vulnerable members of our community and those who need our help during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

If you have received a letter telling you that you are an 'extremely vulnerable' person, or you are self-isolating because you, or someone in your house have symptoms, and you have nobody to support you, we can help you.

We are here to support with food delivery and/or medical needs. We are also here to be a friendly voice and sympathetic ear if that is what you need. Please complete our online form and one of us will get in touch. If you'd prefer, you can call us on 0151 907 8363 (Monday to Friday 8pm to 6pm, excluding bank holidays). Outside of these hours, if it is an emergency you can call us on 0345 050 0148.

What to do if you need urgent mental health help:

- Please call and our dedicated local crisis lines and NHS staff will support you to access the help you need:
 - If you live in Halton, Knowsley, St Helens or Warrington call 01925 275 309
 - If you live in Wigan call 01942 636 395
- The crisis lines are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week and are open to people of all ages – including children and young people
- The crisis lines are now the first port of call for mental health crisis help – it is operated by people in your local area who will know how best to support you. If you call NHS111 you may have to wait longer for help and will be redirected to this local service
- Please note, A&E and 999 are not the best places to get help for the majority of mental health problems – call our crisis line to be directed to the best local service to support you
- You should still call 999 or go to A&E if you have a life-threatening emergency requiring immediate mental or physical health assistance
- For non-urgent help and general wellbeing advice, North West Boroughs Healthcare's website contains information and links to resources to support people with anxiety, low-mood, and worries relating to the current Covid-19 pandemic: www.nwbh.nhs.uk/coronavirus

More information about the new helpline can be found at: www.nwbh.nhs.uk

Parent Info provides support and advice to parents, with contributions from the leading experts and organisations in matters related to young people and families in a digital world.

Openthedoor <https://www.openthedoorcheshire.org.uk>

This link is the force's campaign to support those who are the victim of domestic violence. Please spread this message so we can continue to protect those who need our help most.

We are here if you need to report an incident on 101 as normal and if it is an emergency call 999. But if you are a pupil and in need of support, or concerned about a pupil's welfare please contact one of the support agencies identified below:

Local Children's Safeguarding Board 0151 907 8305 / 0151 5117722 (Office Hours Mon-Thurs, 9am – 5pm, 9am – 4.30pm Fri)

0345 050 0148 (Outside Office Hours and throughout Weekends)

NSPCC Children's charity dedicated to ending child abuse and child cruelty. Phone: 0800 1111 for Childline for children (24-hour helpline) 0808 800 5000 for adults concerned about a child (24-hour helpline) Website: www.nspcc.org.uk

Young Minds Information on child and adolescent mental health. Services for parents and professionals. Phone: Parents' helpline 0808 802 5544 (Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 4pm) Website: www.youngminds.org.uk

Further helplines for conditions such as Stress, Anxiety and Depression can be found on the following link to the NHS: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/mental-health-helplines/>

Useful accounts to follow on Social Media

The following accounts are trusted sources of information and may be better placed to answer any questions you will be receiving.

	Twitter	Facebook
GOV UK	@GOVUK	@UKgovernment
NHS	@NHSuk	@NHSwebsite
Public Health England	@PHE_uk	@PublicHealthEngland
Home Office	@ukhomeoffice	@ukhomeofficegov
Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service	@CheshireFire	@CheshireFRS
North West Ambulance Service	@NWAmbulance	@nwasofficial
Cheshire East Council	@CheshireEast	@CheshireEastCouncil
Cheshire West & Chester Council	@Go_CheshireWest	@cheshirewest
Warrington Borough Council	@WarringtonBC	@warringtonbc
Halton Borough Council	@HaltonBC	@haltonbc
Cheshire Police	@cheshirepolice	@cheshirPolice

Cheshire Police Website: - <https://www.cheshire.police.uk>

Parent Information

<https://parentinfo.org/>

To help families through lockdown and social distancing, new articles on Parent Info tackle some of the key issues they are experiencing, including:

- Separated parents managing arrangements to see their child
- Supporting teens to cope with lockdown
- Looking after their mental health while stuck indoors
- Starting difficult conversations about COVID-19 with their child. You can make this support and advice more accessible by embedding the Parent Info newsfeed in your website for free.

COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT & WELFARE ADVICE

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is having a significant impact on our economy and services and we would like to reassure residents who are struggling to pay their Council Tax bill at this difficult time. Your Council Tax bill pays for essential services that are delivered to all Halton residents. If your circumstances have not changed, you should continue to pay in accordance with the details shown on your bill so we can continue to provide essential services.

If your income has been affected as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak, you should submit a claim for Universal Credit with the DWP on their website here: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit>

You should also claim Council Tax Reduction direct from the Council on our website here: or <https://www3.halton.gov.uk/Pages/CouncilandBenefits/Housing-Benefits.aspx>

If you are struggling to pay your Council Tax please contact us by email at council.tax@halton.gov.uk

Information taken from BBC News article

Can I suspend bill payments?

If you are unable to pay a utility bill - like gas or electric - you should contact the provider as soon as possible, says Graham O'Malley, debt expert at Citizens Advice.

"Depending on the type of bill, they may be able to arrange a payment plan, or have schemes in place for people in financial hardship.

If you're struggling to pay more than one bill, you need to prioritise, because the immediate consequences of not keeping up with some bills are more serious.

Priorities should include "arrears on your mortgage, energy bills or council tax."

Energy UK, which represents Energy suppliers, told Newsbeat the industry "is fully committed to providing all the help and support it can". In terms of broadband bills, the Internet Service Provider's Association urged "any customers who may have trouble paying bills as a result of Covid-19 to speak with their internet service provider."

Sky Sports customers are able to pause their subscription for free, as cancellations have brought the sporting world to a standstill.

BT Sports customers can get one month's credit back, apply online.

Should I tell my landlord I can't pay my rent?

Yes, talk to your landlord as soon as possible, says Amy Hughes, housing expert at Citizens Advice.

"You should explain the situation and could ask for more time to pay or ask to catch up any missed payments by instalments. "If you can't come to an agreement with your landlord, it's a good idea to pay what you can afford and keep a record of what you offered. "You should get advice if you can't reach an agreement because there is a risk that your landlord might try to evict you. In most cases, they'd have to give you notice and get a court order in order to make you leave."

The government has passed a new law, which means landlords have to give three months' notice to end certain tenancy types from 26 March.

"The court service has suspended all possession action for 90 days from 27 March, which means that even if you have been served a notice for eviction it can't be enforced during this time," says Amy.

People who live with their landlord might still get evicted, and there are a few other exceptions where a court order isn't required.

FAITH SECTOR RESOURCES

Halton faith sector resources for use during Covid 19 shutdown

Islam

How to attend a Muslim Friday Prayer service الإسلامية الجمعة صلاة حضور كيفية

<https://youtu.be/uWOKB5EzHSo>

Catch up with a Friday sermon الجمعة بخطبة اللهاق

Catholic

Mass is livestreamed each Sunday from Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral – www.liverpoolmetrocathedral.org.uk, this is normally at 9 am. St Wilfrid's Parish Widnes has Mass uploaded to You Tube link is <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC52-K27EaYwySzRmeP3f3eA>

Free Apps found on the NHS Apps Library

Well-Being Enterprise

Download our Happy place App!

There are thousands of happy places near you that are waiting to be discovered. We want you to join the happy place movement today by discovering and sharing happy places in your community that help you and others to feel good.

Big White Wall

Categories: Mental health, online community

Big White Wall is an online community for people who are stressed, anxious or feeling low. The service has an active forum with round-the-clock support from trained professionals. You can talk anonymously to other members and take part in-group or one-to-one therapy with therapists.

BlueIce

Categories: Mental health, Child health

BlueIce is an evidenced-based app to help young people manage their emotions and reduce urges to self-harm.

It includes a mood diary, a toolbox of evidence-based techniques to reduce distress and automatic routing to emergency numbers if urges to harm continue.

Calm Harm

Category: Mental health

Calm Harm is an app designed to help people resist or manage the urge to self-harm. It's private and password protected.

Catch It

Category: Mental health

Learn how to manage feelings like anxiety and depression with Catch It. The app will teach you how to look at problems in a different way, turn negative thoughts into positive ones and improve your mental wellbeing.

Chill Panda

Categories: Mental health, Child health

Learn to relax, manage your worries and improve your wellbeing with Chill Panda. The app measures your heart rate and suggests tasks to suit your state of mind. Tasks include simple breathing techniques and light exercises to take your mind off your worries.

distACT

Category: Mental health

The distrACT app gives you easy, quick and discreet access to information and advice about self-harm and suicidal thoughts.

The content has been created by doctors and experts in self-harming and suicide prevention.

eQuoo:

Emotional Fitness Game

Category: Mental health

The eQuoo app uses adventure games designed by psychologists to help you increase your emotional fitness and teach you new psychological skills.

You'll also find tips on how to communicate more effectively and maintain your mental wellbeing.

Feeling Good: positive mind-set

Category: Mental health

Relax your body and mind with a series of audio tracks designed to help you build confidence, energy and a positive mind-set.

MeeTwo

Categories: Mental health, online community, Child health

The MeeTwo app provides a safe and secure forum for teenagers wanting to discuss any issue affecting their lives.

You can anonymously get advice from experts or other teenagers going through similar experiences in areas such as mental health, self-harming, relationships and friendships.

My Possible Self

Category: Mental health

Take control of your thoughts, feelings and behaviour with the My Possible Self mental health app. Use the simple learning modules to manage fear, anxiety and stress and tackle unhelpful thinking. Record your experiences and track symptoms to better understand your mental health.

Thrive

Category: Mental health

Thrive helps you prevent and manage stress, anxiety and related conditions. The game based app can be used to relax before a stressful situation or on a more regular basis to help you live a happier, more stress-free life.

Adult Learning

Online/virtual courses that you can access from home.

1) Web Design Course Starting Thursday 7th May 2pm or 7pm

This fantastic 10-week FREE online course is perfect for anyone interested in gaining a basic understanding of website design, planning and development. Ideal for anyone looking to set up their own business or even just wanting to develop their own personal skills To take part you will need access to a computer and the internet and also a Google/Gmail account.

2) Introduction to Coding Course Starting Tuesday 5th May 7pm or Friday 8th May 2pm

This brilliant FREE 10 week online course is perfect for anyone interested in gaining a basic understanding of Coding. During the course, you will learn how to program a Micro: Bit using block-based code and JavaScript programming languages. This course could help you to move onto further qualifications or employment opportunities linked to the coding industry.

To take part you will need access to a computer and the internet and will need a Google/Gmail account.

For further information on either of these courses and details on how to enrol please contact the Adult Learning Team on 0151 511 7788 or adult.learning@halton.gov.uk.

Change Your Life, learn something new!

Karl Landrum
Headteacher