



CARDINAL NEWMAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Sandpits Lane, Keresley, Coventry, CV6 2FR
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T:02476 332382

February 2024

Dear Parent/Guardian

Cyber-attack affecting Cardinal Newman Catholic School – Partial Closure (Tuesday 20 February 2024)

We are writing to inform you that Cardinal Newman Catholic School was recently the victim of a sophisticated cyber-attack. Due to this, we have regrettably had to make the decision that the school will be open tomorrow to only year groups 11 and 13.

The school's IT systems were accessed by an unauthorised third-party using ransomware and resulted in us being temporarily unable to access our network. Immediately following the attack, our business continuity plans (including cyber security procedures) were initiated.

Our systems had the necessary preventative security protocols in place at the time of the incident but unfortunately, as a number of public sector organisations have recently experienced, the criminal attack was sophisticated, and access was achieved. We are not aware of any confidential data breaches and should information to the contrary arise, we will contact you immediately.

The incident has been reported to various organisations including the West Midlands Police Cyber Unit, the Department for Education, our Data Protection Officer, and the Information Commissioners Office (ICO).

As soon as we became aware of the attack, measures were put in place to contain and remove the malicious software and to begin the restoration of our systems. A forensic analysis of our network is being conducted by third-party cyber security specialists to fully investigate the circumstances and impact of the incident. This team will also determine the degree to which personal data has been put at risk.

Cardinal Newman Catholic School uses a number of cloud-based systems, which includes our Management Information System, where the vast majority of the personal data we hold, and process, is stored. These systems were unaffected by the cyber-attack.

The security and protection of personal data is a priority for our organisation, and I assure you that we have been doing, and will continue to do, everything we can to ensure the ongoing resilience of our systems and to prevent a reoccurrence of this type of incident.

As a result of this attack, and the meticulous forensic analysis and restoration work that is being undertaken, our organisation continues to face challenges in terms of IT access which is affecting our school in different ways.

School will resume for all year groups at the usual time on Wednesday 21 February 2024.

We are sorry for any inconvenience this has caused and are doing all we can to resolve the situation.





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Please be aware that students are unable to access their school emails at this time.

Yours faithfully

Ms E O'Connor
Headteacher

Mrs T Boland
Chair of Governors

