

Parent Information: PHASED RETURN TO SCHOOL

Dear Parents and Carers,



At St Mary's we are currently working to safely plan the return to school of Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 pupils whilst also continuing to meet the needs of our essential key workers in line with the DFE guidance. We are making plans to establish how best we can achieve this, manage everyone's safety and protection and maintain the best possible hygiene practices. At the time of writing, a June 1st start is not guaranteed, but planning is underway.

So, if and when our children begin to return to school, it is important that as parents you understand clearly that social distancing will be impossible to fully achieve despite our best endeavours!

However, we feel it important that prior to any of our children returning to school in any capacity, you as parents are aware of the actions and practices which will be in place to reassure you that we are doing all we can to keep everyone safe. We are currently working hard on evaluating and undertaking risk assessments in many aspects of school life to establish how and when this will be possible and what is achievable. We are proceeding methodically and with caution, under significant pressure.

We want to be open and honest with you about the challenges faced, and to outline the steps we are taking and the changes you and your children will see as a result. Anything we do must be sustainable for the foreseeable future and we must balance school and home provision going forward. It is unrealistic for us to return immediately to the National Curriculum or the Early Years Framework in full, and a gradual approach will be used based on the professional judgement of our staff.

Our priority in the first instance will be our staff and pupils' safety and well-being, and it may not be possible to welcome back all pupils in the way the Prime Minister described. The provision on offer will need to be flexible, adapting as the staffing levels change or infection rates alter.

We are not scientists, and so we will be following guidance and scientific advice wherever possible. We also recognise and acknowledge that in this crisis situation, you must do what you feel is the best and safest thing for your child. The government also recognise this, and so fines will not be issued for non-attendance during this period. It would be appreciated however, if you would inform us of non-attendance in the specified year groups if we do start to open our doors in some form from June 1st.

To facilitate the health and safety of everyone, we will return on a **four day week basis** to allow for deep cleaning and preparation on the fifth day.

We ask that only one parent brings and collects your child and that everyone follows the signage and fully respects and complies with the systems and expectations we will have in

place. These systems have been put in place for everyone's health and safety, not to cause irritation or create barriers.

To minimise contact between pupils, children will remain together in designated 'bubbles' which will be small consistent groups. These bubbles will extend and include SMART Club.

The childcare provision for children of Key Workers not in Nursery, Reception, Y1 or Y6 will continue to be available.

Please find below a summary of how 'school' will look, feel and operate during this phased return.

Please read this carefully and share it with your child – it is vitally important that we have a shared understanding and shared expectations during this critical phase.

- Best possible hygiene practices will be in place for everyone in school – Staff and pupils
- Pupils and staff will be washing their hands on entering the building, before and after eating and at given points throughout the day
- Staff will be washing their hands after handling pupil books/ resources
- Good levels of personal hygiene will need to be observed by all pupils i.e. toilets, flushing, handwashing, cleanliness
- Cleaning regimes and patterns will change including frequently touched surfaces, equipment, door handles, toilets
- Soap and water will be available
- Pupils will be expected to observe 'catch it, bin, it, kill it' routines with tissues, which will be available in all areas
- Pupils will be encouraged to help staff in the end of day clean-down of surfaces i.e their own chair and desk and any equipment they have been using
- Pupils must avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth as these are the mucus areas where the virus attaches
- Every item of your child's clothing must be washed daily to limit the virus being transferred from school to home and from home to school. To support parents in this, we **will not** be expecting pupils to wear their uniforms.
- Staff too will be wearing more relaxed/ informal clothing
- Staff will be observing 'social distancing' rules which will include their lunch and break times
- To minimise contact between pupils, pupils will remain together in designated 'bubbles' – small consistent groups
- The reduction in class size i.e 'bubbles' may mean your child will not be with their teacher or their friends
- Playtimes and lunchtimes will be taken in the designated limited bubble group – there will be no contact or coming together with any other pupils and breaks and lunch times maybe at different times for us to be able to achieve this
- Bubbles will have designated play zones which pupils must stay in

- If your child displays any of the known COVID 19 symptoms they must not attend school and you must inform us of the outcome of any positive test to enable us to instruct the remaining members of the bubble to self-isolate for 14 days.
- Pupils will be taken outside as often as possible on a rota/ timetabled basis
- All lunches will be school or home prepared packed lunches which will be eaten in their bubble group. If your child is bringing their own packed lunch from home, please ensure all cartons and utensils are disposable, it comes to school in a bag not a lunch box and your child is able to open and access all the wrappings and seals
- Pupils will need 2 additional snacks – again that they can open and are in disposable wrapping
- Pupils will need to bring their own individual water bottle on a daily basis – rinsed and re-filled
- If you are in receipt of Income Based Free School Meals, the vouchers will cease if your child is attending school as a packed lunch will be provided
- The government have stated that School Meal Vouchers will not be available for the Half term week (25th – 29th May)
- There will be a one-way system in operation around the school if anyone from the ‘bubble’ group needs to move from their base. Pupils will be asked to follow markings on the floor to stay away from each other in the style familiar now in supermarkets and shops
- Pupils will not be lining up; they will be using floor markings to keep safe distances from each other and will need to move slowly between the 2m spaces
- Soft furnishings and soft toys will have to be removed from the learning environment
- We will be unable to:
 - *sing*
 - *have assembly*
 - *access the trim trail*
 - *share resources*
 - *gather other than with the children in the designated ‘bubble’*
 - *have any events, trips or visitors*
- PE will be limited to activities which do not involve equipment or touch and can be undertaken at a safe distance from others. PE kits are not required.
- Times of arrival and departure to school may have to be staggered to avoid any contact with other pupils – specific details will be shared with you
- There will be designated entry and exit points – please follow the signage
- One parent only to bring and collect as outlined above – please follow the signage
- ‘Drop and go’ system in operation – parents will not be permitted to stay or gather on site or around the perimeter
- All conversations with staff will need to be pre-arranged/ pre-booked and need to be by telephone or email. We must limit face to face interaction wherever possible
- High standards in hand hygiene for everyone will be a key factor in keeping everyone safe

- Pupils will have their own individual resources. Pencil cases will have to be left in school
- Pupils must not bring a school bag
- Pupils do not need to bring their reading folder
- Pupils do not need their PE kit
- Pupils will be sitting apart, spaced out on singular tables in rows with space in between where possible (exam style)
- Access to equipment will be limited i.e. no computing suite
- Resources that are not easily washable or wipe-able will be limited or removed
- All pupils will be expected to fully comply with all our guidelines and expectations. If they are unable to do so and therefore risk the health, safety and well-being of others, parents will be contacted and asked to collect them. If pupils cannot abide by the rules, nobody is safe and risk levels rise!
- SMART Club will be in operation for pupils in the year groups who have returned to school, as long as the pupils can remain within their designated bubbles
- Childcare will continue for children of critical workers not in the identified year groups
- Home Learning materials will continue to be available for year groups not currently involved in the phased re-opening plans



These measures sound harsh and unwelcoming. We recognise that this is not what St Mary's normally 'feels' like and a long way from the warm, family, nurturing atmosphere you and your child are familiar with. Given the circumstances, we all recognise that these steps are necessary and appropriate to maximise everyone's safety.

Thank you for your kindness, tolerance and patience at this difficult time. What we do know for certain, is that you will continue to work with us and support us as we consider and establish what a safe return looks like at St Mary's, whenever that may be!

We will be in touch with any further changes or updates and details for those year groups returning. This information will be sent through Tapestry, our school website and Class-Dojo.

In the meantime, please stay safe and look after each other.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs S M Fau-Goodwin

Head Teacher