



# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

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**Head teacher: Mrs A G Toward**



## Information for the wider opening of St Joseph's in September

As we approach the end of the academic year, I am writing to explain the plan for the full opening of school in September. Over the last four months, the whole school community has faced challenges that we could never have imagined. Yet we have faced them. Our pupils have faced them and you, as parents and carers, have also faced them. You have shown determination and resilience in juggling family commitments with home schooling. For this we thank you. We also thank our pupils. Many have needed to adapt to home learning and have needed to display new skills of resilience and independence.

Thankfully, we are delighted to confirm the Government has allowed schools to reopen fully in September and we look forward to welcoming back ALL of our pupils. The school has not been the same without them all.

In order to effectively manage the risks that remain, things will be a bit different when our pupils return to school for the new academic year on Wednesday September 2<sup>nd</sup>. This letter sets out some of the changes and protective measures the government is asking us to put in place and what you will need to do to help ensure we can be as safe as possible for everyone.

Please read the following carefully so you understand the measures and expectations in place to ensure the safety of all pupils and staff.

### DfE Guidance

The DfE guidance for schools returning in September 2020 was published on July 2<sup>nd</sup> and is available [here](#) and further guidance for parents [here](#).

### Attendance

In September, school attendance will be mandatory. This means that the legal duty on parents of children of compulsory school age will apply. It is vital that children return to school as quickly as possible for their educational progress, wellbeing and wider development.

Where shielding advice remains in place for your child, it is important that you communicate this information to me so I can ensure remote learning continues. We will ask for evidence from your child's doctor or other medical professional, to support this requirement. The same support may be considered where a child is self-isolating with symptoms.

It is the expectation that parents will not take a holiday in term-time as this will cause further disruption to their child's education. Holidays in term-time must be in writing to myself using the appropriate form and providing details of the destination to be visited. A request will only be agreed where it is satisfied there is an exceptional circumstance that is in accordance with the Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust policy. If the area to be visited is at high risk of transmission of the coronavirus, the school must ensure that there is an individual risk assessment in place for the child to return to school. Legal powers to enforce attendance will be used where a child misses school without a valid reason and the absence is unauthorised.

## Precautions

We will continue to take precautions in line with DFE guidance such as:

- ensuring everyone at the school cleans their hands more often than usual
- ensuring good respiratory hygiene, by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach
- enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces more often
- minimising contact and maintaining distance where possible

## Virus Transmission and Infection

You must not send your child to school if they have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or have tested positive in the last 7 days. Anyone developing those symptoms during the school day will be sent home in order to reduce the risk in school and further drive down transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). All schools must follow this process.

If anyone in the school becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), they will be sent home and advised to follow 'stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection', which sets out that they must self-isolate for at least 7 days and should arrange to have a test to see if they have coronavirus (COVID-19). Other members of their household (including any siblings) should self-isolate for 14 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms.

We would ask parents and carers to support us by engaging with the NHS Test and Trace process so that cases can be identified and action taken - this means if your child develops symptoms, you should arrange for them to get a test and you should inform us of the results of that test.

## Pupil illness

**IF IN DOUBT DO NOT SEND.**

If your child becomes unwell at school, you will be asked to collect them immediately. We therefore need you to be contactable at all times. Your child will be kept in isolation with a member of staff while we wait for your arrival - you may drive into the school car park and should use the disabled entrance to collect your child.

If coronavirus is suspected, the staff member will be wearing a disposable apron, gloves and mask. You must then follow Public Health England advice.

## Arriving and leaving school arrangements.

To avoid large numbers of pupils and parents gathering, the start and end of the school day will be staggered for different year groups, as shown in the timetable below. Signage around the building will indicate where different bubbles of pupils need to go.

Following Government guidelines, parents cannot gather at entrance gates or doors or enter the school building without pre-arranged consent or appointments. Gates will only be opened at the times set out below.

Year Group	Drop Off Time	Collection Time	Where
Little Joeys	8.35	11.35	FS gate
FS1	8.35	11.35	FS gate
FS2	8.35	3.00	FS gate
Y1	8.35	3.05	Y1 gate
Y2	8.45	3.15	Y1 gate
Y3	8.35	3.05	Gate near garage
Y4	8.40	3.10	Gate near garage
Y5	8.45	3.15	Gate near garage
Y6	8.30	3.20	Gate near garage

Parents are asked to take children to classrooms where they will be met at the doors by school staff. Unfortunately, parents are not allowed into classrooms or cloakroom pods. If you have more than one child in school and they finish at different times, you need to collect your youngest child first from their allocated collection point.

Parents must observe social distancing measures when dropping children off and collecting them. All parents should observe any signage or markings in place.

Only one parent/adult should drop and collect their child. Younger siblings must remain beside their parents. Toddlers should remain in their pushchairs and not be allowed to roam. Children should not touch or use outdoor equipment

Please leave the school promptly and do not linger to talk to others - even if at a safe distance

### **One Way System**

From September, there will be a one way system for KS2 children which will operate at drop off and collection times. Children will enter the school site through the gate near our school garage but parents/children should exit through the FS gate. This ensures social distancing.

### **FS Children**

Dates for the return of FS1 children have been agreed with parents.

To help with the transition of our new FS2 children, during the first 2 weeks FS2 children may leave after lunch (1pm). By 14<sup>th</sup> September, they will be ready for full time school I'm sure.

### **Y6 Walking Home**

Parents must sign an updated form if they give permission for a Y6 child to walk home without supervision. Parents should be confident that their child will adhere to social distancing guidelines and not gather with friends outside school. If a Year 6 child is seen not adhering to this guidance, parents will be informed.

### **Breakfast Club and After School Clubs**

These provisions will not start immediately, we plan to open them from September 21<sup>st</sup> once other operations have proved to be working. More information in the new school year.

### **Wraparound/30 Hours**

This provision will start from September 2<sup>nd</sup>.

### **Organisation of Children in school**

We will group children in year groups into 'bubbles' which will remain consistent and separate from other 'bubbles'. It has been decided that the school will operate four larger phase bubbles across the school. One for the EYFS classes (Little Joeys, FS1 and FS2), one for Year 1 and 2, one for Year 3 & 4 and one for Year 5 & 6. For the majority of their time in school the children will be with their own teacher and support staff but at playtimes and lunchtimes they will be separated into phase bubble groups that will only have limited contact with one other year group outside.

Children in EYFS will continue to follow a play based curriculum with some restrictions in place. Whole class teaching sessions will be no longer than 15 minutes and all classrooms will be well ventilated. Younger children do not understand social distancing and it is not a requirement in the guidance. Children will come into contact with all the children in their class and they are likely to come into contact with all the children in EYFS. Staff will endeavour to maintain a 2 metre distance from each other, and from the children as the adults are statistically at higher risk.

KS1 and KS2 classrooms will be redesigned so that all children face the front. Tables will be set out in rows. Windows will be open and internal doors will also be left open to ensure that rooms are well ventilated.

All teachers and other staff can operate across different classes in order to facilitate the delivery of the school timetable. Where staff need to move between classes and year groups, they will try and keep their distance from pupils and other staff as much as they can. Again, we recognise this is not likely to be possible with younger children and teachers in primary schools can still work across groups if that is needed to enable a full educational offer.

There will be no whole school or key stage assemblies during the first part of the autumn term. At this stage, we can't say what will happen with whole school events such as Masses and Christmas productions. Let's hope we can still have them as they are very special times in school.

### **Curriculum**

We will continue to provide an ambitious and broad curriculum in all subjects to support the needs of our pupils and address the gaps as a result of lost learning time.

We have been given clear expectations from the Government on what we are expected to teach when pupils return in September. This is being referred to as "The Recovery Curriculum, which will enable teaching staff to identify and support the varied needs of our pupils and address the gaps as a result of lost learning time. This will include not only their academic development but equally as important address their social, emotional and behavioural needs in order to fully support their mental health and wellbeing. More information about "The Recovery Curriculum" will be sent out to parents in the autumn term.

Small group and one to one work will be essential to help pupils catch up on work missed due to the school closure. Small group work is permitted within each bubble. Teachers and TAs may need to move between bubbles but will ensure school hygiene practices are followed.

### **Computing**

Laptops will be numbered and only used by allocated children from the same bubble. They will be cleaned after use.

### **Mental health and well being**

We know that children will need a lot of support in September and much of our curriculum will focus on this. We are lucky to have Mrs Mead, who provides in school counselling to children.

### **Reading Books**

Reading books will be sent home on a daily basis. When the books are returned they will be 'quarantined' for a period of time.

In September, please return any school reading books or reading records currently at home.

### **Cleaning**

School will be deep cleaned during the summer break and additional cleaning will be done during the school day. Resources that need to be shared will be cleaned. Frequently used resources such as pencils and pens will be allocated to children and stored in their own trays or pencil cases if they bring one. Surfaces will be cleaned more regularly than usual.

### **Safety and handwashing**

Staff and pupils are well used to what is required for preventative hygiene and have been following Government advice since March.

They will be encouraged to wash their hands more frequently using soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Instructions are displayed within all toilet rooms.

Pupils will wash hands at the following times:

- On arrival into school
- After break time
- Before lunch or eating
- After lunch
- After going to the toilet
- After using a tissue

Children will be provided with soap and hand wash, this should not be brought into school.

Children should avoid touching their face, mouth and nose area and staff will remind children about this regularly.

### **Respiratory Hygiene**

The 'Catch it, Bin it, Kill it' approach should be used by all. Each classroom has a lidded bin and used tissues should be placed in these.

Bins will be emptied each lunchtime and at the end of each day.

Posters will be displayed around school to remind children about good hygiene and social distancing.

Public Health England does not (based on current evidence) recommend the use of face coverings in schools.

### **Movement around the school site**

Movement around school will be kept to a minimum. There will be no whole school gatherings of any kind so children will be classroom based for most of the school day. Children will be shown how to keep to the left if walking in communal areas is necessary.

### **Break times and lunch times**

Breaks will be staggered to enable social distancing. More than one group will be allowed to play outside but only within their designated area. Activities will be limited; for example no football, four square or activities where children are in close proximity. Each class will have their own box of playtime resources which will be cleaned regularly.

### **Areas that are out of use**

Children will not be able to use the outdoor play equipment including the trim trail, gym equipment and tyre areas.

### **School Uniform**

Children should wear full school uniform from September. They may wear summer uniform until the end of September if they so wish.

### **Equipment in School**

It is still recommended that pupils limit the amount of equipment they bring into school each day, to essentials such as lunch boxes, hats, coats and books. Bags are allowed. Children can bring in their own pencil case in September. It should only contain the following items: pencil sharpener, coloured pencil set and a ruler. These pencil cases will be staying in school at all times.

### **PE Kits**

From FS2, children should have a PE kit in a named PE bag. This should come into school each Monday and return home each Friday. Children will change for PE lessons.

### **Swimming**

At this time, I am unable to tell you when swimming lessons will resume.

### **Water Bottles**

Children must have a clear water bottle in school. Coloured water bottles will not be allowed from September. Bottles should be named and should be purchased from school (£1.50). Children are only allowed to drink water in school. There are water coolers in school so bottles can be refilled but should be sent full each morning. Flavoured water and juice should not be sent into school to hydrate children. All pupils are able to get a drink of juice or milk at lunchtimes.

### **Catering Arrangements**

The school is currently discussing requirements with our catering teams to ensure a full provision for all pupils requiring meals is ready and in place for the start of the new term. Lunchtimes will be staggered.

### **Behaviour**

The usual high expectations for pupils' behaviour continue.

All pupils will be expected to display high standards of behaviour in line with our behaviour policy expectations. Any pupil caught compromising the safety of children or staff will be sanctioned as explained in our COVID behaviour policy addendum which can be found on our website.

Any amendments that will need to be made to school behaviour policy in line with reducing the risk of infection have been sanctioned through a policy addendum.

### **Contact with School**

Parents should do all they can to ensure that children have all that they need for the day (e.g. water bottles, reading books) at the start of the day and if there is an emergency meaning that their child needs to be collected at a different time should telephone the school first. Staff will then arrange to meet parents with their child in the open air. All other communication should be done by telephone or e-mail. Please ensure that we have your most up to date contact details and that you are able to be contacted throughout the day.

### **Safeguarding**

Parents should contact Mrs Toward regarding any safeguarding issues.  
Updated Safeguarding Posters are displayed in classrooms and around school.

### **SEND**

Parents should arrange a telephone appointment with Miss Wright regarding any SEND (Special Needs) issues or concerns.

### **School Minibuses**

Pupils on dedicated school services, such as ours, do not mix with the general public on those journeys and tend to be consistent. This means that the advice for passengers on public transport to adopt a social distance of two metres from people outside their household or support bubble, or a 'one metre plus' approach where this is not possible, will not apply from the autumn term on dedicated transport.

The following measures are in place on St Joseph's minibuses:

- use of hand sanitiser upon boarding
- additional cleaning of vehicles
- organised queuing and boarding
- distancing within vehicles wherever possible
- the use of face coverings for children under the age of 11 is not required.
  
- windows will be open to provide ventilation
  
- a bin for used tissues to be stored, children are asked to have tissues with them when travelling
  
- adults will wear face coverings

Children will not be allowed to board the minibus if they, or any members of their household, display any symptoms of Covid-19.

Children may be with children from a different bubble but these groupings will be kept constant. Children will be seated in a first in, last out order to reduce movement and will sit in allocated seats.

A letter has been made available today, please print out, sign and return to school. Alternatively, paper copies can be collected from school and completed here. All forms will need to be returned to school by Friday this week. Mrs Farrier will confirm routes and times during the school holidays.

**Lockdown**

In the event of a Borough wide lockdown similar to that in place in Leicester from Saturday 4th July, St Joseph's would revert to an enhanced version of the arrangements which were in place during the nationwide lockdown. We would return to using Google Classroom to deliver home learning activities.

**And finally.....**

I hope this information is useful, should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at school. I appreciate that Covid-19 provides challenging circumstances and know that you will work with us to make sure everyone is kept as safe as possible. These circumstances won't last forever!

On behalf of my governing body and staff, thank you for your continued support and hard work throughout this year and these unprecedented times. To families who have lost loved ones or suffered during lockdown, please know that our deepest sympathy and prayers are with you.

I must thank staff for their hard work during the last four months, they are well and truly ready for a well-deserved break.

We hope that you have a safe and happy summer and look forward to seeing you and the children return to school in September.

Of course, tweaks or changes may need to be made as all children return in September. What worked well with smaller groups may need amending with a larger amount of children.

Things are moving and changing at a fast pace and should there be any major changes or updates these will be communicated via our website, Marvellous Me, Facebook and Twitter pages. Please ensure that you keep up to date with school procedures.

Mrs A G Toward

Head Teacher

