



St Thomas More Primary
Erith Grove, Easterside, Middlesbrough, TS4 3QH
Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust
Email enquiries@stm.npact.org.uk



Mrs J Apolloni B.Ed. (Hons), NPQH
Telephone 01642 317350
www.stm.npcat.org.uk

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Dear Parent/Guardian,

As we approach the end of the academic year, I am writing to explain the plan for all children to return to 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 homeschooling. For this we thank you and we thank our children. Many have needed to adapt to home learning and needed to display greater skills of resilience and independence.

Thankfully, we are delighted to confirm that the Government has announced the full reopening of schools in September and we are very much looking forward to welcoming back ALL of our pupils who we have missed so much. However, in order to effectively manage risks that remain and to keep our pupils and staff safe, school will be different when pupils return on Wednesday 3rd September. This letter sets out the changes and protective measures the government have asked us to put in place and what we will need to do to help ensure everyone remains as safe as possible.

Attendance

In September, school attendance will be mandatory. This means that parents have a legal duty to ensure, if their child is of compulsory school age, that they attend school on a daily basis in order to benefit their educational progress and wellbeing.

Where shielding advice remains in place for a pupil, it is essential that you contact school to inform us so we can make provision for your child to continue remote learning at home. We will need evidence from your child's doctor to support their absence. The same support may be considered where a child is self-isolating with symptoms.

It is the expectation that parents will avoid 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 the Headteacher using the form provided on the school website, including 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 in school washes their hands regularly
- 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

You must not send your child to school if they show symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), or, if you have someone in your household who does. Please 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 asap.

Operational guidance

School arrival and departure: 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. Parents and children are not permitted to gather at the gate or on the yard. If a parent needs to speak with a member of staff they must contact the office and make an appointment.

Year group	Start Time and Arrival Point	Home Time and Collection Point
Morning Nursery	8:40am at Nursery Gate station	11:40am at Nursery Gate station
Afternoon Nursery	12.10am at Nursery Gate station	3.10pm at Nursery Gate station
Reception	8:40am at Nursery Gate station	2:10pm at Nursery Gate station
Year 1	8:40am on Main Yard -Y1 station	2:20pm on Main Yard -Y1 station
Year 2	8:40am on Main Yard -Y2 station	2:30pm on Main Yard -Y2 station
Year 3	8:50am on Side Yard -Y3 station	2:40pm on Side Yard -Y3 station
Year 4	8:50am on Side Yard -Y4 station	2:50pm on Side Yard -Y4 station
Year 5	8:50am Front Entrance -Y5 station	3pm Side Entrance - Y5 station
Year 6	9am Front Entrance -Y6 station	3:10pm Side Entrance - Y6 station

Reception children

During the first week back to help with their transition from Nursery and induction into Reception, new children will experience a shorter day and finish earlier at 1pm when parents will be able to collect them.

Breakfast and after school provision arrangements: There will be no breakfast or afterschool clubs for the first half term. This will be reviewed accordingly and re-instated when it is safe to do so

Movement around the school site: Throughout the school day, pupils will be organised in class bubbles which means they will be unable to mix at any time with children from other classes – this includes breaktimes and lunchtimes which will be staggered for each class

Classroom layout: Classroom layout has been revised to enable pupils to socially distance as far as classrooms will permit with some classes being taught in rows to enable them to socially distance.

Catering arrangements: We are 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.

School uniform: All pupils are required to wear full school uniform. P.E kits need to be worn on the days that children have PE (Days for all classes to be confirmed in the first week of school in September).

Behaviour: 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.

Curriculum: We will continue to provide an ambitious and broad curriculum in all subjects. However, the government have provided clear guidelines on what schools 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.

And finally.....

We hope you find the information in this newsletter helpful. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at school.

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. Out of such sadness however, we must not lose sight of the amazing light and love we have witnessed from people pulling together in our communities to save and help others, not least key workers and our wonderful NHS staff – we are blessed to have you.

We hope that you have a safe and happy Summer and look forward to seeing you and the children return to school in September. For any further updates over the school holidays, please keep your eyes on our school website and Facebook and Twitter pages

God bless and very best wishes,

Mrs Apolloni

