



Thursday 27th August, 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

COVID-19 – Start of Term Arrangements – September 2020

A very warm welcome to our new school year 2020 - 2021. For those pupils and families joining St Mary's School for the very first time a very special welcome - we look forward to meeting our new families on Wednesday 2nd September. For those returning to us, we hope pupils are already looking forward to seeing their friends once more and re-commencing learning with their class teachers.

Throughout the summer, staff have continued to work hard to ensure St Mary's School is ready for the full re-opening to all pupils. We have been busy putting all the measures in place to ensure the safety and well-being of our pupils, staff and our community.

This letter will outline and reiterate many of the measures I communicated in July, but also incorporate all new guidance received from the Government during the last 6 weeks.

Is St Mary's School COVID safe?

We have completed a very thorough risk-assessment of the possible ways in which pupils (and staff) could transmit/catch COVID in school and have put controls in place to minimise this risk. The Local Authority and the Governing Body have approved the risk assessments and the outcomes.

How are we minimising the risk of transmission?

Hygiene controls

Soap dispensers have been installed in all sinks in school and soap blocks removed.

When pupils enter and leave school, staff will help and direct pupils to sanitise and wash their hands. This will continue to happen throughout the day so that they will always have clean hands. Hand sanitisers and soap dispensers are available in every classroom and pupils are able to bring their own small hand sanitiser, clearly labelled with their name, if they wish.

The "Catch-it", "Bin-it", "Kill-it" message is displayed throughout school and bins are all lined and have lids. Each class will have its own supply of tissues but pupils may bring their own pack of tissues.

Cleaning controls

All areas of school have been deep cleaned and all the infant classrooms and the infant corridor have been fully redecorated. Some of the smaller areas in KS 2 have also been fully redecorated. Cleaning has been increased, particularly of surfaces and frequently used furniture such as door handles.

In PE equipment will only be used if/when it is possible to clean thoroughly.



Shared reading books will be quarantined on return to school and cleaned before re issuing.

Each child will have their own pen/pencil/rubber/pencil crayons/whiteboard and pen but resources can be used and shared within the individual bubbles.

Any shared resources across the school will be thoroughly cleaned between uses.

Social distancing

Pupils maintaining 2-metres distance from each other **at all times** is not possible in schools. There isn't enough space. However, we have arranged classrooms so that there is distance between pupils, and they don't sit facing one another.

Cloakrooms will not be used other than for storing PE kits and book bags. Coats will remain on the backs of chairs in Y1 – Y6.

Pupils will be reminded repeatedly about the importance of distancing, but parents particularly of very young children in Early Years especially should be aware that it won't be possible to enforce distancing all the time when children are playing and learning together.

Pupils will go straight into school on arrival to school and leave the school premises promptly at the end of the school day.

Restricting mixing between groups of children

All pupils are in a class "bubble". They will have their own class teacher(s) and some TA support. They will stay in this "bubble" during break and lunchtimes.

When will school be open?

We welcome all our pupils back to school on **Wednesday 2nd September**. Reception pupils will be on a phased induction of mornings or afternoons, with their first full day on Friday 11th September.

Which entrances should we use and what time should we arrive?

Reception

Pupils in Reception will be taught by Miss Zylko in the Reception classroom.

Entrance/ Exit through the small gate from the playground which leads to the Reception outdoor play area

Arrive 8:40 am. Collect 3.10pm

Whilst Reception are on part time from the 2nd Sept – 10th Sept. A morning session will be 8:40 – 11:40am. An afternoon session will be 1:10pm -3:10pm

Year 1

Pupils in Year 1 will be taught by Mrs Ernest in the Year 1 classroom.

Entrance/ Exit through the Infant Entrance in Year 1.

Arrive 8:40 am. Collect 3.10pm



Year 2

Pupils in Year 2 will be taught by Mrs Barlow and Mrs Hardman in the Year 2 classroom.

Entrance/ Exit through the Lower Entrance.

Arrive 8:40 am. Collect 3.10pm

Year 3

Pupils in Year 3 will be taught by Mrs Thomas in the Year 3 classroom.

Entrance/ Exit through the Year 3 Classroom Door.

Arrive 9:00am. Collect 3:30pm

Year 4

Pupils in Years 4 will be taught by Mrs Booth and Mrs Burke in the Year 4 classroom.

Entrance/ Exit through the Junior Entrance.

Arrive 9:00am. Collect 3:30pm

Year 5

Pupils in Year 5 will be taught by Mrs Corless in the Year 5 classroom.

Entrance/ Exit through the Year 5 Classroom Door.

Arrive 8:50am. Collect 3:20pm

Year 6

Pupils in Years 6 will be taught by Mr Day in the Year 6 classroom.

Entrance/ Exit through Year 6 Classroom Door.

Arrive 8:50am. Collect 3:20pm

*If you have children in more than one class and attending at different times, then all pupils in that family should arrive at the **earlier time**. The older pupil who is arriving at the earlier time to their class should enter through the main entrance. When collecting pupils at the end of the day please collect the youngest pupils first and then pupils from older classes at the **earlier time** from their classroom door.*

What will pupils need to bring with them?

- Book bags can be brought into school.
- We will be sending reading books home. All reading books sent home before the lockdown must be returned during the first week. Books received in school will be quarantined for 48 hours and thoroughly cleaned before being sent out again. *Resuming reading will be a main focus and priority in school in ALL classes and for ALL pupils. Please ensure your child reads daily when we return to school. This is a key and essential life skill which underpins the success and progress in all curriculum areas.*
- The children **must** bring a water bottle in from home. This will remain on the child's desk. The bottles will be sent home for washing every day; **please ensure this bottle is clearly labelled.**



- Pupils may bring their own packet of disposable tissues and hand sanitiser if they wish. Please label hand sanitiser.
- If we are fortunate to have lovely weather when we return, please remember to apply sun cream. If sun cream is sent in with your child, it must be clearly labelled and children must be able to apply themselves.

What will lunchtime and break times look and feel like?

- All Infant children will eat their lunches in the school hall in their bubbles. Reception pupils will be having an earlier lunch than usual to accommodate this. There is a revised menu available on the school website, hot meals are provided but with a reduced choice.
- All junior children will eat their lunches in their classrooms. The school kitchen can provide a warm packed lunch to be eaten in the classrooms at the cost of £2.40 per day, if required.
- Please note to facilitate the lunch time arrangements Y5 and Y6 will have their lunch at the slightly later time of 12:30 – 1:30pm
- Free school meals, for those eligible, will continue to be provided.
- For those pupils bringing their own packed lunch, please bring this in a disposable bag, which can be thrown away at the end of lunchtime **or** in a lunchbox that will return home with the pupil which will need to be cleaned thoroughly each night.
- Lunch and break times will be taken in their own bubbles.
- Each bubble will play out in different zones, and the number of zones will be limited

What do we ask of Parents/ Carers/Grandparent bringing pupils to school?

- **Only one parent to bring pupils onto school grounds.**
- All year 5, 6 pupils to be left at the school gates and pupils enter on their own.
- **Please arrive promptly at the allocated time.**
- Pupils to enter their classroom immediately and NOT remain on the playground.
- Pupils must stay with their adult at all times.
- Parents should remain socially distanced whilst on the school grounds, please do not gather at the school gates, please arrive for your allocated time.

What happens if I want to speak to my child's teacher or senior member of staff?

Please phone school on 0161 770 8309 or e-mail us at office@stmaryscecrompton.oldham.sch.uk . Staff including myself and other Senior Leaders will have a lot to manage and may not be instantly accessible but we will get back to you as soon as possible. Please do not come to the office with messages unless they are **extremely urgent. Please be patient!**

What will happen about parents' evenings, school performances and church services etc?

This is still very uncertain and Government guidelines are changing constantly. We will hold a parents evening during the Autumn Term but the format is likely to be very different. I will update you when we have further information and we know what is possible within the guidelines and resources available.



Will face to face music tuition take place?

The music centre have prepared their own risk assessments about how they can safely hold face to face tuition. The relevant music teachers will be in touch with each school to discuss risk assessments, available space and practicalities and a decision will then be made as to whether tuition can resume safely. There will be no tuition in the first two weeks of school. If Music Tuition is viable we will give every year 3 pupil and any other Key Stage 2 pupil the opportunity to sign up for this service. I will update parents once we have more information.

Will swimming for Year 3 pupils take place?

The Local Authority are reviewing swimming provision and looking at risk assessments on how this can be managed safely, including transport. Schools have not yet received this information for their consideration. Therefore, as we return in September pupils at St Mary's School will not swim and we will review this again later in the term.

Can my child wear a face covering in school?

This is very topical at the moment. The current Government guidance is that there is no requirement for any primary school pupils or staff to wear a face covering. Educationally, pupils need to be able to interact and communicate with their teacher/TA. It is very difficult to do this if the child (or teacher) is wearing a face covering. Teachers, like parents, read a lot from a young person's expressions. They can tell when young people are "stuck" or thinking or anxious. You can't get that from the eyes alone. It is better that we can hear and see clearly what each other is saying and we keep some distance apart.

If national advice changes, we will of course follow this guidance.

Will there be Before and After School Facility and Extra Curricular Activities?

There will be no extra curricular activities.

Before and After school facility is available to all pupils and is by prior arrangement directly with Squirrels. Many of the same procedures that are in place in school will be in place for Squirrels.

They will operate two discrete bubbles, one for Key Stage 1 pupils and one for Key Stage 2 pupils, both bubbles will be based at the opposite ends of the school hall. Pupils will sit for an activity with someone from their own year group. Each bubble will have their own zone outside.

If for any reason the school hall becomes unavailable, Squirrels would not be able to offer their services. Squirrels will provide parents with notice as soon as practically possible.

Does my child have to attend school and will I be penalised if I choose not to send them?

School attendance is once again mandatory. Fixed penalty fines **may** be issued if children do not attend.



What happens if a pupil develops COVID symptoms in school?

We will contact you to say we are concerned that your child is showing symptoms and they will be kept in isolation from other children. You must then arrange to collect your child immediately, arrange a test, and self-isolate. The family must also isolate until you have the outcome of the test.

What happens if a pupil (or member of staff) contracts COVID?

If a case is confirmed, we will work with the local public health authority (who have a lot of experience of tracking and tracing interaction in the local area).

It appears that the transmission route is more likely to come from outside school from the family or wider community than from inside school, where controls are quite tightly enforced. The public health authority would need to know who the child/member of staff had been in contact with, which is why it is so important to maintain the school bubbles.

One pupil (or member of staff) being confirmed with COVID will be worrying for their family who will have to self-isolate, but it doesn't mean there is an outbreak in the school.

If my child is at home, will lessons be available online?

From 1st September, the requirement is that all children and young people are provided with education. If parents do not send their child to school, then they may be liable to a fine. If a young person is absent through sickness, they aren't up to learning, and we will help them catch up when they return to school. If a young person is absent because the family has to self-isolate, we will make resources available to help the child to continue learning. If we have to send a group of students home for testing, we will provide resources whilst they await the results. But when our schools are fully open to all, we cannot provide individualised education as well, so attendance is necessary.

Finally...

Thank you for taking the time to read this long and detailed letter. Notwithstanding the challenges, we cannot wait to welcome back all our pupils and get on with life and learning.

We wish all our families good health and happiness in the weeks and months to come. None of us has ever gone through anything like COVID before, so we are learning all the time. We will give you the best advice we can, based on all the information we have.

We ask you to work with us so that we can look after the wellbeing of our young people, our staff and our community. If you are concerned, or we get things wrong, please let us know directly. We value your feedback and we will keep learning. We are all only human and kindness is really important in these unusual times we find ourselves in.

Kind Regards

PA Hartley
Headteacher