



St. John's R.C. Primary School

Keeping In Touch Newsletter 12th May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Following the Prime Minister's announcement on Sunday, and the guidance published by the government on Monday, I am sure you have many questions about any possible return to school.

In this week's newsletter there is advice and information to help, along with links to the official advice for parents and carers from the government. We hope this helps you to make sense of this very confusing time.

God Bless—we look forward to seeing you all soon



From BBC Newsround

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround>



Coronavirus: When will schools go back?

As some countries start to come out of lockdown, we are seeing children returning to school.

Pupils in countries such as China, Australia, Denmark, Norway, France and the Netherlands are back in their classrooms - although the rules vary from country to country.

For example, only primary-school-age children have gone back in some parts of the world, class sizes are being kept smaller, or lessons are taking place outside. In France, secondary school pupils have to wear masks.

Starting classes again can be a tough and complicated decision. So, what's happening here in the UK and what do we know so far?

What's happening with schools in the UK?

[Schools closed their doors](#) to all except vulnerable children and pupils whose parents are key workers on 20 March due to the [coronavirus pandemic](#). For now, this will stay the same.

At the moment, the government says around 2% of children are going to school in person, with most schools doing lessons remotely.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson has suggested that some primary school years in England could return from 1 June at the earliest - but only if [plans for ending the lockdown go well](#).

The government's plan for easing lockdown states that the aim is to "ensure that the youngest children, and those preparing for the transition to secondary school, have maximum time with their teachers".

Mr Johnson has also said that: "Our ambition is that secondary pupils facing exams next year will get at least some time with their teachers before the holidays."

In Wales the First Minister, Mark Drakeford, said "schools will not return to normal on June 1", while Scotland has also sketched out plans for a phased return of schools but says that will only happen "when safe to do so".

In Northern Ireland, Education Minister Peter Weir has spoken of a possible phased return of schools in September.

Useful links to information from the government:

Information about reopening schools - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>

Coronavirus outbreak FAQs: what you can and can't do: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do>

From BBC Newsround:

Coronavirus: What's the latest advice about wearing masks?



You might have seen a few people wearing masks recently.

Some people wear them because they think a mask could protect them from [coronavirus](#), or because they think covering the nose and mouth helps prevent the disease from spreading.

There are different rules and advice in different countries but at the moment the World Health Organization and the UK government both say that masks aren't recommended for everyone to wear.

So don't worry if you've seen other people wearing and think that you should too - wearing a mask is NOT essential for everybody.

However, the UK government now wants people in England to wear 'face coverings' in places where social distancing isn't possible, such as on public transport or when visiting a supermarket.

While people in the UK are not being advised to wear masks, they are now being advised to wear 'face coverings' on public transport or in shops where [social distancing](#) is difficult.

The Scottish Government has also recommended that people could use face coverings (not masks), for example fabric like a scarf, to cover their nose and mouth in certain situations too.

It did also highlight though, that there is limited evidence for whether face coverings can stop the virus spreading and that they shouldn't replace hand washing and social distancing.

Northern Ireland has issued the same advice on face coverings

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/52200989>

Following on from our advice last week for parents to make sure they still take children who are injured or unwell to A&E or the GP:

NHS England says it is still offering essential vaccinations and is appealing to parents not to miss appointments for their children during the pandemic.

[The childhood immunisation programme](#) protects against diseases including whooping cough, measles and meningitis.

Visits to clinics and GP surgeries are allowed as long as none of the family is experiencing symptoms of Covid-19.

Public Health Wales said this week that [it had seen a small drop in routine vaccination numbers](#).

Vaccinations routinely given in schools, such as the human papillomavirus (HPV) jab offered to older children, are currently suspended - but may be available from individual clinics.

"The national immunisation programme remains in place to protect the nation's health and no-one should be in any doubt of the devastating impact of diseases such as measles, meningitis and pneumonia," said Dr Mary Ramsay, head of immunisations at Public Health England.

"During this time, it is important to maintain the best possible vaccine uptake to prevent a resurgence of these infections."

Last month Unicef [warned of future measles outbreaks around the world](#), as a result of vaccination delays due to the pandemic.

'Drive-through' clinic

Some surgeries have taken steps to try to make the process as socially distant as possible.

The Project Surgery in East London is offering a "drive-through" service twice a week, where families can come in either by car or on foot, but do not go into the surgery itself.

It was launched when the number of routine vaccinations the surgery was doing dropped from 12 per week to just three because parents were afraid to come in.

https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-52499701?intlink_from_url=https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/topics/c40rjmqdlljt/children&link_location=live-reporting-story