



St. John's R.C. Primary School

Keeping In Touch Newsletter 18th May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

As you will have seen from the recent government announcements, schools have been asked to plan for a gradual reopening starting with Reception, Year 1 and Year 6. These children would be attending school alongside vulnerable pupils and the children of keyworkers who have continued to come to school, including during the school holidays, since the start of the school closure. We may not be able to accommodate all pupils in these year groups due to space restrictions and the need to keep children 2 metres apart.

The government has said that this wider opening of schools will only take place when the **five key tests** are met; our plans to open to a small number of pupils will only be put into action once we are assured that this has happened.

If we do invite a small number of children to return to school, you should be aware of the following points:

- * The school day will be very different to the 'normal' school day that children and parents/carers are used to.
- * Drop off and pick-ups will be staggered to avoid groups of adults mixing (only 1 adult per child will be permitted, with no siblings brought along) and will involve a strict one way system to help with social distancing at the school entrances.
- * Staggered drop off and pick up will mean that the school day is shorter than normal—depending upon which group your child is in, they may start school later or finish school earlier than usual.
- * Group sizes will be between 7 and 10 children. This means that one class of thirty pupils will take up at least three classrooms and will need at least three teachers to supervise them. This will limit how many classes we can start to invite back in to school, as we do not have enough classrooms or enough teachers for everyone to be taught in a group of 10.
- * Teachers who are currently setting online work may be teaching in classrooms; this may mean that there is not as much work set for children still at home, due to time constraints..
- * If staff are absent due to sickness, we may have to limit school places even further.
- * The children must stay in the same group each day and will not mix with other groups.
- * The same adult must stay with the same group each day. This means that children may not be in a group with their class teacher or a familiar adult.
- * Tables/desks will be spaced as far apart as possible and older children will be expected to stay at their desks during the day except at limited break times, which will be staggered to avoid groups mixing. Lunches will be eaten in the classroom at the children's desks.
- * All unnecessary furniture and items which will be too difficult to clean will be removed from classrooms (eg soft furnishings, soft toys, toys with intricate parts).
- * Break times will be very different to normal - children will have to continue to socially distance, and will not be permitted to play on outdoor equipment due to the difficulty of keeping this clean in between use by different children.
- * If a child or adult tests positive for the virus, the rest of their group and the staff of that group must subsequently self-isolate for 14 days.

Under normal circumstances, school is the best place for your child to learn, both academically and socially. However, during the current crisis **the decision to send your child in under the current circumstances is entirely yours. Parents/carers do not have to send their child in, and they will not be fined if they choose not to.**

In order to understand your concerns, we will be sending you a link to a survey where you can let us know your thoughts. Please do your best to complete this as soon as possible, so that we can move ahead with our plans. We will send out text reminders about the survey - it will close on Friday 22nd May.

We would like nothing more than to see all pupils back in school as quickly as possible. This newsletter is not intended to worry you or put you off, but to inform you of the facts as far as we know them at the moment. Please be assured that any plans to return will give the highest importance to the health, safety and well-being of pupils and staff.

We look forward to seeing you all soon - God bless.

Michael Unsworth

Headteacher