



## St. John's R.C. Primary School

### Keeping In Touch Newsletter 18th May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope this newsletter finds everybody in good health and good spirits. I know that many of you will have enjoyed a Blessed Eid, even though it will have been a very different type of celebration this year. Whilst we have been enjoying the beautiful weather over the half term, we have also been very busy considering the latest advice and recommendations - from the government, their scientific advisers and the local authority - to ensure our school community stays as safe as possible during any gradual reopening of school to a small number of year groups.

You will remember that in my last newsletter I said that we would only reopen school to more pupils once we were sure that the government's five key tests are being met. On 28th May, Boris Johnson said that he believed that the five key tests have been met, although the Association of Directors of Public Health disagree. Based on documentation published by SAGE (the government's own scientific advisers), Rochdale Council have advised all schools to delay reopening until at least 15th June.

Unless the advice from SAGE changes further, we will start to reopen school to **Y6 pupils only** from Monday 15th June. We have written an extensive action plan and risk assessment for reopening the school; once this has been approved by Rochdale Council, we will contact all parents/carers of pupils in Y6 to offer a place in school for their child. We may eventually be able to extend this reopening to other year groups, but at the moment we can only accommodate Y6 because of the need to spread pupils out and socially distance in the corridors and playgrounds.

Thank you to all those parents/carers who were able to complete our questionnaire—it has helped us understand your concerns about returning to school, and we have tried to include these concerns in our action plan. If your child does receive the offer of a place in school, please be aware of the following:

- You will need to provide us with up-to-date contact numbers in case we need to call you whilst your child is in school. Even if you believe we have your most up-to-date contact number, please complete the contact details on the form we send you to make absolutely sure
- We will expect pupils to attend school in their uniform. If this causes problems for you - for instance if you have thrown away old uniform that is too small, or have passed uniform on to be used by another pupil - please let us know so that we can try to help
- Drop-off times and pickup times will be staggered and will be strictly monitored to ensure social distancing is maintained. Further details will be included in documentation you will receive prior to your child returning to school, but please note the following:
  - \* Children will attend school from Monday to Thursday; school will be closed each Friday to allow us to 'deep clean' the classrooms and washrooms, and to allow teachers to plan and prepare activities for the following week
  - \* If your child is offered a place, we expect them to attend every day, Monday to Thursday. It is not a 'drop-in' offer.
  - \* Children must be dropped off and picked up by one adult only, and no siblings should be brought

along unless they have also been offered a place in school

- \* You will be expected to stick to your allocated drop-off/pickup times - there should be no waiting around at the school gates because of the risk of passing on infection
- \* There will be no opportunity for parents/carers to have a quick chat with teachers when they drop off or pick up their child, as we will need to stick rigidly to the staggered timetable. If there is any information you need to pass on to your child's teacher, please contact the school office by telephone
- \* Parents/carers will not be admitted into the school office unless they have a prior appointment. Prior appointments can be made by telephoning Mrs Malik or Mrs Wren in the school office
- \* There will be a strict one way system in place for drop-off/pickup. Parents/carers and children will **only be able to enter** the school premises through the gate on Ann Street, and will **only be able to exit** the school premises through the gate leading to the church car park. We realise this may entail some additional walking, but it is essential for us to maintain appropriate social distancing. Any parent/carer not abiding by this rule will not be allowed to enter the school premises

I realise that I have mentioned a lot of '*nots*' and '*no opportunities*' in the list above, and I am sorry if it sounds harsh, but we must all try our hardest to keep everyone safe. This risk of infection has not gone away, we are just trying to manage the risk and get back to normal as much as we possibly can.

For parents/carers of children in the other year groups, the waiting goes on for the time being. Please be assured that we will open school to more pupils as soon as we feel it is safe to do so. I met with the senior leaders yesterday to plan opportunities for your children to meet their new teacher before the end of the summer term. We will keep you up to date with these plans as soon as we are sure we can put them in place.

Whenever your child returns to school - 15<sup>th</sup> June, later in the summer term, or in September - we want to be sure that they feel safe and comfortable and have the opportunity to talk about their concerns and worries caused by the school closure, the lockdown and the coronavirus pandemic. If there is a particular worry that you would like us to discuss with your child, either individually or as part of a class activity, please contact your child's teacher through the school office and we will do all we can to help. Mrs Robinson, our Pastoral Manager, will be on hand to support individuals and small groups of pupils with their emotional well-being.

Finally, if you have a child in Y6 you will be contacted shortly by Mrs Malik and asked to fill in short questionnaire. This will help us to plan for Y6 returning to school from 15<sup>th</sup> June. Once we know who will be taking up the offer of a place, we will be able to provide you with further information to help prepare you and your child for coming back to St John's RC Primary School.

As always, you are in our thoughts and prayers. We look forward to a time when we can be altogether once again, working together and aiming high on our journey with Christ.

God Bless

Michael Unsworth

Headteacher



**St John's RC Primary School**

love o **f** learning  
and pl **a**ying together  
one com **m**unity  
a **i**ming high  
hel **p**ing each other  
and pra **y**ing together

On our journey with Christ