

St Joseph’s Catholic Primary School Regents Gate

Long Causeway Exmouth Devon

EX8 1TA

Headteacher: Mrs N Taylor-Bashford

Tel: 01395 264875

31.8.2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you have had a lovely summer.

As the start of school nears I am sure that for parents there is a mixture of relief the children are returning but also growing levels of anxiety. I want reassure you that we are doing everything possible to make the school as safe a place as possible for the children but also keep it a place they recognise and are comfortable in.

This letter is an adaptation to the one I sent out in July. The guidance has changed but everything I put in the July letter is still relevant but I have added some other updates.

From Monday September 7th the school is open again for all children. We are really looking forward to having the children back in school. We have missed them.

We fully recognise that some children will return to school, running through the gates with enthusiasm, whereas for other children the return to school will be an anxious time and will require careful managing. Staff will be focusing on the children’s mental health and well-being and there will be a whole school topic called – Marvelous Minds. Time will be spent listening to concerns, building relationship and re-establishing routines and expectations.

We will be following the Department for Education guidance for effective infection protection and control.

This involves:

* cleaning hands more often than usual. Every room has sanitiser by each door. Sanitiser dispensers have been installed outside each classroom in the corridors.
* each bubble has been assigned different toilets and sinks.
* ensuring good respiratory hygiene by promoting the ‘catch it, bin it, kill it’ approach
* regular cleaning of frequently touched surfaces
* minimising contact and mixing by altering, as much as possible, the environment (such as classroom layout) and timetables (such as staggered break times).
* active participation in Track and Trace
* no whole school assemblies or gatherings, including no singing.
* keeping areas ventilated as much as possible
* minimising contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend

# Classes and Bubbles:

In order to reduce the risk of transmission of the virus children will work in their class groups. Their class will then be part of a bubble which can mix for things like playtimes and lunch.

Different bubbles will not come into contact with other bubbles. Reception and Nursery will be one bubble

Yr 1, 2 and 3/4 will be one bubble Yr 5 and 6 will be one bubble.

# Start and finish arrangements:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Start time** | **Finish time** | **Drop off/collection****point** |
| **Year 5 and 6** | 8.45am | 3.15pm | Outside classroom patio area. Use main playgroundentrance. |
| **Year 1, 2 and 3/4** | 8.55am | 3.30pm | Outside classroom patio area. Use main playground entrance. |
| **Reception and Nursery**Times for Nursery may to be different to begin with for individual children, this has been discussed with families as necessary. | Doors will be open between 8.45-8.55 to allow a gradual drop off as we are aware some new starters may find this difficult.  | 3.15pm for Nursery 3.30pm for Reception | FSU garden entrance on the field. Enter either through field gate on Claremont Grove or through school carpark and around the back onto thefield. |

We recognise it is difficult for parents with siblings but it worked well last term with parents sending in the older sibling first and waiting outside or in the car until the younger sibling goes in. It is vital that parents do not come in earlier than the allotted time otherwise that defeats the point of having the staggered times.

* Drop off and collect promptly at the allotted time.
* Only send one adult on site to drop off and collect rather than both.
* When waiting to drop off or collect your child please ensure you socially distance from others. This is for your own safety and also sets a good example for the children. Masks are not statutory in the playground but are statutory for adults when you cannot socially distance so parents may find it sensible to wear one.
* Class teachers will welcome the children on arrival and all children will wash/sanitise their hands on arrival. Unfortunately, no parents may enter the classrooms or patio areas. The only exception is that FSU parents may enter the FSU garden area to the rear of the school. Again, only one parent per child.
* Keep your child next to you when they are waiting to go in. They must not be running around or go on the equipment before or after school as this risks mixing with other bubbles.

# In class:

Class teachers will stay with their classes and teaching assistants will remain within their assigned class where possible. PPA teachers such as Mrs Turner will work across bubbles and in these cases the teacher will need to remain at a distance of 2m wherever possible.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Class | Teacher | Teaching Assistant |
| FSU | Mrs KeepingMrs Clarke  | Mrs RushMrs ArthurMrs WhiteMrs Mills |
| Yr 1 – Rowan  | Mrs Mahony Mrs Robertson  | Miss Christopher |
| Yr 2 - Sycamore | Miss Rowe | Mrs KerrMiss Weston |
| Yr 3/4 - Cedar | Mrs OwensMrs Monks  | Mrs Briggs |
| Yr 5 - Maple | Mrs Spinks | Mrs Coleman |
| Yr 6 - Beech | Mrs JukesMrs Monks  | Mrs Greenway |

In classes the older children can sit next to each other but they will be in rows forward facing rather than the usual face-to-face in groups.

In years 1-6, staff will maintain their distance from the children whenever possible.

The children will have their own resource pack of whiteboards, pencils etc to minimise contact between children. They will be able to share some resources which can be cleaned regularly.

Doors and windows will be kept open as much as possible.

Movement around school will be reduced so school library books will be kept in classes rather than the children all accessing the library. Books will be sent home weekly and when they are returned they will be quarantined for at least 72 hrs.

All soft furnishings such as cushions and cuddly toys have been removed.

# Outside:

The playground and field will continue to be zoned so bubbles can be outside without mixing. Outside play equipment will be cleaned between different bubble uses.

Our wooden trim trail will be used by different bubbles, with it cleaned or quarantined between uses.

PE lessons will go ahead but there will be no contact games and any equipment used will be cleaned or quarantined before use by another bubble.

Forest School will go ahead but any equipment used will be cleaned or quarantined before use by another bubble.

# Lunch:

School Meals will be available. All school meals need booking on ParentPay up to 8am on the day. For Reception, Year 1 and 2 school meals are free. Nursery, Year 3 and upwards are

£2.35 and must be paid for when you book the meal.

In order to minimise contact between bubbles, Reception and Nursery will eat their lunches in classrooms. The hall will be split so the other bubbles are kept separate with children sitting side by side not directly opposite to one another.

The children are likely to be hungrier when they first return so please can you ensure you send them in with fresh fruit or vegetables as a snack to keep them going.

# Bringing items into school:

We will continue to minimise the number of items that are transferred between school and home.

Children should only bring in what they need and all items must be clearly named:

* Coat,
* Book bag or small bag,
* Reading book,
* Lunch if not having a school dinner
* Water bottle – children must have a named water bottle every day.
* PE kit.
* Please do not send in any toys from home.
* On the days when they have Forest school children should come to school wearing their Forest School clothes all day. A note will be sent home about this to the relevant classes.

# Medication:

If your child requires any medication this must be named and given to the office and a form completed as usual. Forms will be available in the red racking system between the two main entrance doors.

# School uniform:

Children should return in full school uniform. Please ensure all uniform is named

with labels or permanent pen.

Nursery can wear their own clothes.

Uniform is:

* Grey skirt, grey pinafore, grey shorts or grey trousers **– not black.** White polo shirt
* Green cardigan or jumper with the school logo
* White or grey socks or tights
* Green or white hair bands
* Black sensible shoes – **not heels or boots**

 **PE kit:**

* Green logo t-shirt
* Black shorts
* Plain black or navy jogging bottoms for if it is cold.
* Trainers

# Communication:

Following guidance Staff must socially distance and should remain 2m away from other adults. You can have a brief chat at the end of the day on the playground but if you need a longer discussion, it may be easier to arrange for a phone call.

Only one adult is allowed in the office at a time so, whilst you are welcome to come in, please wait outside by the sign until the office is free. Alternatively, it may be easier to phone or email.

# Face masks and hand sanitiser:

Face coverings in primary schools are not recommended for either staff or children.

If a child wears a mask to school they will need to remove it before entering, place it tied in a bag and then put it inside their school bag.

Guidance states it is not recommended that children wear masks in school. This is due to the increased risk of transmitting infection by them fiddling with it, not using it correctly, having to remove it and then put it back on after eating etc. We do not expect any children to be wearing masks in September. If you feel very concerned about this, please speak to me before the start of term.

Children cannot bring their own hand sanitiser to school, we will provide it.

Staff may at times need to wear PPE for close contact work such as first aid.

# If someone has symptoms:

If a child or adult has symptoms they must not come onto the school site.

If a child or adult develops symptoms whilst in school, they will be safely taken from the classroom and taken to an isolation area. In the event of a child developing symptoms we will notify parents/carers and ask you to collect them straight away.

Any adult or child with symptoms of covid-19 must isolate and remain away from school for at least 10 days. We ask, that where possible, children are tested so we can rule out any potential cases or isolate bubbles in the event of a positive test. It is an expectation that everyone engages with NHS Track and Trace if possible.

If a child or adult tests positive for Covid, the children and staff in that bubble will be notified and will need to self-isolate for 14 days. The school will work with Public Health with regards to necessary actions.

We require parents to inform us immediately of any positive test results within their family or contacts.

# Breakfast and After School Clubs:

Breakfast and After School Club will start again on Monday 7th September. These must be booked in advance on ParentPay. The letters sent out in July about these are on the website under the Coronavirus tab.

We will not be running any other after school clubs for at least the first half term. We will keep you updated if guidance changes.

# School trips:

School trips are a big part of St Joseph’s but at the moment, unfortunately, they are not possible.

For the Autumn term, if we are able to do any trips, they will only be trips within walking distance. These will all be risk assessed to check they can be carried out with the necessary protective measures in place.

Our Yr 6 residential has been postponed until March when hopefully it will be able to go ahead but we will follow the guidance. We have not booked our Yr 5 residential yet, we will wait and see what happens over the Autumn term.

I hope this offers you reassurance about all the details we have put in place to minimise risks to our school community for the coming term.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to ask. The office will be open from

Thursday 3rd September 9am for phone calls or emails.

Best wishes

Nicky Taylor-Bashford