

## Handbook for Parents –children returning to school from June 1<sup>st</sup>

Summer has returned and we are looking forward to seeing your children. These are certainly different times and we would like to reassure you that we have been very busy, since the Prime Minister's announcement of the phased reopening of primary schools, putting in place the necessary safeguards and plans for our school.

There has been much on the news about what schools might look like but we hope from this leaflet to give you a flavour of what St. Paul's school will be like. We have also included answers to specific questions which parents have emailed into the school.

Everyone's safety is important. To prevent the spread of coronavirus we have used guidance issued by the DfE to inform many of the changes which your children will notice.

- **The DfE has a collection of guidance to schools at:**  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-schools-and-other-educational-settings>
- **Particular government guidance docs:** [Actions for educational and childcare settings to prepare for wider opening from 1 June 2020](#), [Preparing for the wider opening of schools from 1 June](#), [Safe working in education, childcare and children's social care](#), [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings](#)

-Please note that guidance from the DfE is continually being sent out to schools and updated and we will make alterations to routines and procedures in light of new information.

### **The DfE guidance states the importance of effective infection protection and control**

There are important actions that children and young people, their parents and those who work with them can take during the coronavirus outbreak, to help prevent the spread of the virus.

In all education, childcare and social care settings, preventing the spread of coronavirus involves dealing with direct transmission (for instance, when in close contact with those sneezing and coughing) and indirect transmission (via touching contaminated surfaces). A range of approaches and actions should be employed to do this. These can be seen as a hierarchy of controls that, when implemented, creates an inherently safer system, where the risk of transmission of infection is substantially reduced.

These include:

- 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 childcare settings, schools or colleges
- cleaning hands more often than usual - wash hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with running water and soap and dry them thoroughly or use alcohol hand rub or sanitiser ensuring that all parts of the hands are covered
- ensuring good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach

- cleaning frequently touched surfaces often using standard products, such as detergents and bleach
- minimising contact and mixing by altering, as much as possible, the environment (such as classroom layout) and timetables (such as staggered break times)

The DfE guidance states that ‘we know that, unlike older children and adults, early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff.’ The arrangement of the buildings at St. Paul’s will also mean that children will not be able to walk past each other being 2 metres apart as some corridors are not even 2 meters wide. One way routes are not practical in our buildings, so tape on the floor and signage will help to encourage walking to the left hand side.

### *When should we arrive at school?*

At St. Paul’s we are fortunate to have several entry gates which we intend to use to space out entry to the buildings. All parents will be asked to say goodbye to their children and leave them at the gate so they walk in on their own –to reduce mixing parents will not be allowed to accompany their child to the classroom door.

Parents arriving at the site should be careful to avoid congregating and grouping at the entrances – maintaining adequate social distance.

On St. Paul’s site:-

- A Reception bubble will use the nursery gate at 8.45-8.55am
- A Reception bubble will use the gate opposite the church at 8.45-8.55am
- The key worker/vulnerable children childcare group will use the Police gate at 8.45-8.55am
- A Reception bubble will use the Reception gate and be asked to arrive at 8.45am
- A different Reception bubble will use the Reception gate at 8.55am –the gate will be closed at 9.05am

On Alex House site we have only one entry gate.

- 2 year 1 bubbles will be asked to arrive at 8.45am
- 2 year 1 bubbles will be asked to arrive at 8.55am
- The year 6 bubbles will be asked to arrive at 9.05am –the gate will be closed at 9.15am

As you can see we intend to stagger entry times and it is therefore essential your child arrives at the designated times. Arriving late will put your child and school staff at greater risk as they will come into contact with additional people. If you arrive after the school gates are locked, you will need to go the main gate on St Paul’s site. It will be locked and you will need to phone the number on the gate and a member of staff will come to you when free.

After your child has entered their class they will then be expected to wash their hands. Younger children will be supervised, repeatedly shown if necessary how to do this correctly.

Your child will be asked to wash their hands at specific times during the day in addition to the usual washing after they have used the toilet. There are also a number of hand sanitisers available around the school which can be used, especially before lunch.

*What do we do if we have a message for the teacher?*

To reduce mixing, parents will not be able to see the class teacher in the morning. If you have an essential message you will need to email the office and staff will endeavour to pass the message on or answer your query. Parents need to be aware that we can't guarantee every message will be passed on in time especially if they arrive late in the afternoon after 2pm.

*What will my child's classroom look like?*

To reduce the risk of transmission your child will now be in smaller groups. This means that we need to use more rooms in the school to accommodate the different bubbles and therefore your child may not be in their usual classroom. Before returning to school we will communicate where your child's new bubble will be located so you know which gate to enter by.

In the Years 1-6 to encourage social distancing, we have altered seating arrangements so that most children will sit one child to a table, in allocated places. These tables are often now arranged in blocks or rows. In some classrooms additional circular tables have been added to accommodate for 15 pupils –these tables are larger and two pupils may be seated at these but with a dividing strip down the middle to encourage distancing.

Younger children, such as those in Year 1 may work on the carpet. When sitting on the carpet, adults will try to encourage and remind pupils to sit a small distance away from each other.

In the Foundation stage (Reception and Nursery) it is going to be virtually impossible to ensure that children socially distance and stay 2m apart. When sitting on the carpet, adults will try to encourage and remind pupils to sit a small distance away from each other. Children will still have learning and exploring time following the free flow format of the Foundation stage. There will be times when children will sit at tables to carry out activities but seating will be arranged to encourage some distancing- e.g. chairs placed at the end of tables.

As the layout of classrooms has been altered, in some rooms it is now impractical to access the coat hooks. In those classrooms, children will place their coat under their table where they sit.

In all classrooms, soft furnishings such as cushions, dolls, teddies, puppets etc have been removed. A teacher may use a soft item e.g. a puppet as a teaching prompt but they will not be passed around the children.

In Years 1-6 children will be encouraged not to share stationery equipment. Children will be asked not to bring in pencil cases from home. Each child will be given a selection of pencils and equipment which they will keep in their tray. They will keep their tray at their table seat. Some resources will have to be shared but where possible they will be wiped daily after use.

In the Foundation stage, it will be very hard to ensure children use the same pencil etc. Again, where possible, equipment will be regularly cleaned to try to reduce the possibility of transmission but parents need to be aware it is impossible and impractical to wipe every piece of equipment after each individual child has used it.

To reduce the risk of transmission, many doors and windows will now be opened to provide ventilation and reduce the need for people to touch handles.

#### *Will my child be with their class teacher?*

To try to reduce the transmission of coronavirus, the DfE has given guidance of reducing class sizes to groups (or 'Bubbles') of 15 children. This means that we need double the amount of rooms and adults needed for each previous school class. For this initial phase of return we endeavour to have each bubble led by a teacher but this will not necessarily be your child's previous class teacher –that adult can not teach both bubbles –they must not teach one bubble for half the week and then swap to teach the other bubble for the second half of the week.

#### *Who else will be with my child?*

To reduce the possibility of transmission we want to try to minimize the mixing of people within bubbles. We intend to assign a teacher to stay with one bubble. Other teachers and teaching assistants will be assigned to a reduced number of bubbles to provide cover and support.

If staff absence increases, some staff will need to move bubbles to cover. Parents need to be aware that should we reach the point where a large number of staff are absent, we cannot merge bubbles so some children will not be able to attend on those days. Unfortunately, this may be at short notice but it will be unavoidable.

#### *What will lessons look like?*

The curriculum content will come from the usual plans for the Summer term. There is likely to be a greater emphasis on the use of individual text books. Initially teachers will give a greater focus to recapping the basics so there will be lots of reading, phonics, grammar and maths activities. Older children will have English, maths and transition sessions for Year 6 in readiness for moving to secondary school. All Children will also investigate the topic scheme for their year group. Other curriculum subjects will be added as suitable. Parents do need to be aware that with the extra hand washing measures and staggered entry, exit and playtimes some lessons will be shorter in length.

At the start of each block of return, teachers will provide sessions to recap standards and expectations in regard to behaviour. Rules and routines will be explained, especially new measures brought in to reduce the risk of transmission. If needed, there will be sessions where pupils have opportunities to share and discuss their concerns.

### *Years 1-6*

Although the content covered in lessons might not change, the way your child will work will, especially the older they are. To reduce the opportunities for transmission of the virus many children will often sit individually at a table, keeping paired work to a minimum. Younger children may still sit on the carpet but teachers will encourage and remind your child to move a short distance apart. The resources they use might be different, again reducing the amount of equipment which is shared. Your child will be discouraged from walking/ moving around the room. Teachers will still move around pupils but again try to reduce the frequency. Some pieces of work will be easier to mark at a distance than others e.g. marking sums; the teacher can say the answers and your child can mark their own answers, for problem solving activities your child can explain and discuss their thinking. There will be other pieces such as 'Big Writes' where the teacher will want to mark the whole piece and during the lesson will need to support individual children working at a closer distance to encourage, develop and improve efforts.

### *Foundation Stage*

Again the content covered will come from the Summer term programme. Teachers will have to adapt plans due to the need to remove particular resources such as soft toys. To reduce the risk of transmission some resources, such as reading books, will be organised and split into daily boxes. Children will not be able to learn and play with certain resources such as sand and soil –these areas will be zoned off. The outdoor learning space will also be reduced as each bubble has to have it's own area.

### *What will my child wear to school?*

Children will be expected to wear full school uniform on their return to school. In the warm weather can you make sure your child brings a hat.

### *Will my child need to wear a face mask?*

Following DfE advice children will not need a face mask. There is also a concern that using one incorrectly can actually increase risks for the person wearing it. As a result, children will not be allowed to wear face masks in school. If you want your child to wear a mask on their walk / journey to school, that is a choice for you as a parent but we ask for them to be removed before your child enters school.

### *Will adults be wearing face masks in school?*

Again, following DfE advice, most staff will not wear masks. The only time a member of staff will wear a mask is if another person falls ill and is showing any of the signs of coronavirus and for their own protection they would then wear PPE equipment of a mask, an apron and gloves.

### *What can my child bring into school?*

Your child needs to bring their P.E kit to school on the first day and leave it in school.

To reduce the risk of transmitting the virus the DfE has asked for your child not to bring in items from home and not to take items from school home either.

There will be a few exceptions:-

-medication –asthma pumps, epipens etc will need to be brought into school on the first day as usual.

-Named water bottles

-packed lunch boxes, if your child normally brings their own lunch to school.

Not being able to take things home has implications for reading books and homework. If your child has their reading book / bag at home, they are asked to bring it back on the first day and leave it at school. Your child will continue to read books at school. We ask that they read their own books from your household when at home. Homework books will not be sent home. We are currently sourcing homework materials for next term. If your family doesn't have access to the internet at home, paper tasks can be set but again must not be returned to school. Please email your teacher if you need this support.

We know that many children have completed lots of tasks from the home learning packages we have shared on our website. Unfortunately, these papers can not be brought to school.

Sadly, children will not be able to bring in sweets when it is their birthday –we are very sorry.

#### *What will playtimes be like?*

Playtimes are already staggered at different times of the day. Their actual timings may be altered by a few minutes to reduce the instances of bubbles mixing between different sessions.

To reduce the possibility of transmission, your child will remain in their bubble at playtime. Some bubbles will have a play area to themselves. When we have a larger playground, this will be divided and only children from one bubble will play in each section. Each bubble will have their own bucket of playground equipment to play with.

#### *Will my child continue to receive milk and fruit?*

The government fruit and milk schemes are currently suspended. Your child will be allowed to bring in a water bottle and a piece of fruit in a throw away plastic bag or a small box/ bag of raisins –all these items need to be clearly labelled with your child's name. Please encourage your child not to share and swap these items.

#### *What will happen if my child is upset, falls ill or hurts themselves?*

We will continue to follow most of the school's usual procedures. Staff will comfort an upset child as they always have which will mean there won't be social distancing in this instant. If a child falls on the playground and injures themselves and is in need of medical attention they will be seen by additional staff. As much as possible, we will encourage independent care – where children help themselves. Staff will oversee and provide support where necessary.

If a child falls ill the school will follow their usual procedures which may mean your child is seen by an additional adult, your child may go to the welfare room for attention or may have their parent contacted and if appropriate may need to go home.

If your child exhibits any of the symptoms of coronavirus we will follow DfE guidance which will involve your child being withdrawn to the welfare rooms, other children will then be treated elsewhere, parents will be contacted to come to school to collect their children. In these instances adults supervising the child exhibiting symptoms may wear PPE equipment such as masks, gloves and aprons. After the child has left the school, the medical room will be cleaned. You will be asked to contact the NHS/111 and will not be able to return to school until you have clearance from the NHS. We may require written evidence of this before your child returns to school.

#### Will my child meet in larger groups?

This is something we want to try to avoid to reduce the possibility of transmission of the virus. There will not be assemblies in the school halls or in the church –each bubble will have a daily assembly in their classroom. There will not be any special class assemblies performed to the rest of the school. There will not be any school trips.

Children will not meet in the dining hall for lunch. All children will have a packed lunch in their classroom. If your child normally has a school lunch provided by the catering team, they will receive a school packed lunch. It will come in a paper bag and adults will show your child how to open this to make a table mat. Children will remain at a table to eat –for the older children, this will be the same table they have been working at.

#### What happens at the end of the day?

To reduce the risk of transmission we will be using a variety of gates and stagger leaving times just like entry to the school in the morning but parents will come onto the school site to collect their child.

On St. Paul's site

- A Reception bubble's parents will enter by the nursery gate at 3.10pm and wait in the nursery playground –gate closed at 3.20pm
- A Reception bubble's parents will enter by the gate opposite the church at 3.10pm and wait on the playground –gate closed at 3.20pm
- The Key Worker/vulnerable childcare group's parents will enter by the Police gate at 3.20pm and wait on the playground –gate closed at 3.30pm
- A Reception bubble's parents will enter by the Reception gate at 3.00pm and wait on the playground –parents must leave promptly as the next group arrive as below
- A different Reception bubble's parents will enter by the Reception gate at 3.10pm – gate closed at 3.20pm

On Alex House site we have only one entry gate.

- 2 Year 1 bubble's parents will enter at 3.05pm and will wait on the playground – children will be released at 3.10pm and parents are asked to leave promptly as the next group arrive as below.
- Another 2 year 1 bubble's parents will enter at 3.15pm and will wait on the playground - children will be released at 3.20pm and parents are asked to leave promptly as the next group arrive as below.
- Year 6 parents will enter at 3.25pm and will wait on the playground –children will be released at 3.30pm and gates will be closed at 3.40pm.

When entering the playgrounds parents will see crosses marked on the ground approximately 2m apart so you can line up safely to wait for your child. The class teacher will release children in order of the queue. This will take more time than usual and so we rely on the patience and support of all parents to ensure that the dismissal is as safe as possible.

*Will I be able to meet my child's teacher at the end of the day?*

To reduce the risk of transmission, 'drop in' meetings at the end of the day will not take place. If you have an important message, please email the school office. Parent evening style meetings to discuss your child's progress are currently suspended. If a teacher has a concern about your child, they will contact you by telephone or email.

*Will my child stay in the key worker/vulnerable group?*

If your child has been attending the school during the lockdown period, they will still have a place in school. We will continue to run this group. If their year group re-joins the school, they will move to a bubble group for their year and follow the organisation for that bubble group.

*What other measures will be in place?*

There will be many routines and procedures to reduce the risk of transmission of the virus:-

There will be additional cleaning of surfaces, handles, door pads etc throughout the day.

If any member of your family is showing signs/ symptoms of coronavirus

- a new persistent cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of smell or taste

**they must not come onto the school site** and should isolate with their whole family at home and seek medical advice.

The teacher in each bubble will have their own supply of cleaning materials to clean the tables and other surfaces during the day.

Children will continue to be encouraged to use the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach when they cough or sneeze. They will especially be encouraged not to cough or sneeze into their hands but use their arm or elbow if they don't have a tissue.

Each bubble will be assigned particular toilets to use, again to reduce the risk of transmission.

As long as your child uses these products sensibly, they will be able bring in their own small individual bottles of hand sanitiser and hand cream which they leave in school. These items must be clearly labelled with your child's name and your child must not share these

with other children. In Years 1-6 they can be placed in your child's classroom tray. In the Foundation stage the staff will direct children where to keep these resources.

*Will we be admitting other year groups soon?*

As you are aware from DfE announcements the government has suggested that the phased re-opening of schools should start with Reception, Year 1 and Year 6. The school has to assess what provision it can safely offer within the constraints of the building and its capacity and staffing capacity. Once we know how many parents firmly wish to send their pupils back to school, we will announce which Year groups can return. We intend to do a phased return but at present we can't say if all years will return before the Summer break.

*Can we bring cycles and scooters?*

Yes, but we would ask that if your child can walk it would ease storage. Some pupils do arrive by car and then take their scooter out of the boot to ride the small distance to school – it would be great if these pupils could leave their scooter at home. Some bubbles will store their bikes and scooters in different locations to aid easy flow. Your child will be shown the new location when they return.

*Can a friend pick up my child?*

In the present climate, the government wants children to stay in their household groups so we ask that drop off and collection of children is by an adult who is living in the family home. If the government announces childminders may now return to work, they may also collect your child if that is your normal routine.

As previously, children from Years 5 and 6 can go home by themselves if we have written permission.

Parents, please note that we can not accommodate daily emails informing us of your child's going home routine.

*My printer does not work, can the school print out work?*

We are being as supportive as possible and currently there are a small number of families who have requested work in paper form. While this is a manageable number we will try to help so please contact the school for a pack. Please be aware that we can not facilitate printing off individual requests for particular sheets.

*What if my child forgets something at home, can I drop it to the office?*

To reduce the risk of transmission, the office will remain closed to footfall enquires. People who do have a query are asked to email or telephone the office. If your child forgets something important such as their packed lunch or medication you will be able to bring it to the main gate on St. Paul's site, ring the school number and a member of staff will come to you when they are free to take the item. Unfortunately, children are now being asked to reduce the items they bring in from home so shouldn't be bringing in show and tell items, work they have completed or reading books so please don't bring these to the office.

*Will school still be able to give my child medicine?*

We will only be able to administer prescription medication in liquid or tablet form where a dose **must** be taken in the middle of the day. If your child needs to take two doses per day that can be done before and after school at home. Giving medication will increase the number of adults which your child is coming into contact with at school. To reduce the risk of transmission we will encourage children to be as independent as possible in taking their

medication e.g. an adult will observe older children take a tablet from the packet themselves rather than the adult touch the packet. For a younger child liquid medication will be measured out by the adult, the spoon placed for the child to pick up and take the medication themselves.

If you need to drop off prescription medication, please email the school in advance. You will need to come to the main gate and telephone the office. A member of staff will come out to you when they are free. You will be asked to complete the medical form as usual.

*Does my child have to attend school; will I be fined if I don't bring them?*

The DfE has stated that for this initial phased return period the decision for your child to return, if their Year group is offered a place, is with parents. Whatever you decide for your child you should stick by that decision so they either return to school or stay at home. Children should not be coming to school one day and not the next, dropping in and out of the provision. The DfE will not be asking Education Welfare Officers to fine parents for non-attendance.

We will be contacting parents to state which year groups will be returning and on what date. You will then have a short period of time to take up the place and we will ask you to send an email to the office to confirm your intentions. Once we know the number of children returning we can then make firm arrangements and year bubble groups will be established.

If you decide to keep your child at home but after a few days change your mind, you will NOT be allowed to send your child into school until the next return date is offered by the school. There will then be a date when additional pupils can start –they might be added to an existing bubble or if there is a large increase in numbers a new bubble will be established.

Remember, bubbles will always contain children from the same year group with the exception of the Key worker bubbles. To reduce the risk of transmission, we intend to keep the same bubble group for a set block of two or three weeks (NB –there is an exception to this that a few children at our school have special needs with EHCP's and they might not attend for the full block of days).

*How often will the toilets be cleaned throughout the day?*

Cleaning routines are already established within the school. Enhanced cleaning is now occurring following DfE guidance on reducing risk of transmission of coronavirus. Should a child or adult fall ill with symptoms of coronavirus during the school day and they use a toilet, this toilet will then be closed off and cleaned.

*Will after-school activities and breakfast club be running as normal?*

The DfE wants schools to reduce the risk of transmission as far as they can and suggest we keep pupils in bubble groups of 15 children. These children should stay together throughout the school day. Opening breakfast and aftercare clubs would break this strategy and your child would be mixing with children from other bubbles. We are therefore not offering breakfast or aftercare clubs at this time.

*How will you decide on sending children home who may be exhibiting symptoms?*

We will follow DfE guidance and procedures. You will be telephoned to come and collect your child and asked to isolate at home. Your child will wait in a medical room for your arrival. If this space is unavailable they will wait in a space where other people will be at

least a distance 2metres away. The school adult waiting with your child will follow DfE guidance and this may mean they wear PPE equipment such as a mask, apron and gloves.

We will ask you to follow health department advice to contact your GP or 111 to seek further advice and a covid test.

Once the child exhibiting symptoms has left the school the area will then be cleaned.

*Will parents be informed if another child/adult in the bubble is sent home with COVID symptoms?*

Initially parents of other children will not be informed if a child in the bubble is sent home with suspected COVID symptoms. The child concerned will be directed to access COVID testing. If the test is negative, they will return to school once their health has recovered. If they test positive, the school will work with Public Health England. At this stage staff and pupils in the same bubble are likely to be advised to isolate and seek a test themselves if they develop COVID symptoms. DfE/PHE guidance in this area is evolving and we would follow whatever is the current advice at the point of a positive result.

*Why are Y2 - Y5 children not having to come to school?*

We are following DfE guidance which is recommending we start with Reception, Years 1 and Year 6 in a phased return. At present we do not know if and when all years will return.

*Will you be educating the children on COVID-19, and how would you approach this?*

When children return to school, they will have been experiencing very different things in the last 2 months; everyone's life has altered significantly and school life will be different too. Teachers are intending to spend part of the day with circle times or discussion times so children can talk about their concerns. How frequently this happens across the week will depend on the needs of the children. We will still use our school mentors to link up with identified children as needed.

The school has a number of curriculum resources to support pupils in understanding Coronavirus and to address the anxiety and concern that can arise from the lockdown. These have been developed by a range of experienced professionals. We also have access to more specialist counselling and other services, should there be a need.

On return to school, teachers will spend time showing pupils the new systems and routines. There will also be lots of new signs to help and remind people. If a child needs extra support e.g. to wash their hands we will help them.

*Is the school able to share statistics on how many children and/or staff have been infected by COVID-19?*

No. The school does not have access to any more information than is currently available in the public domain.