

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are really looking forward to welcoming everyone back to school next week and hope you have had a good summer.

Although the majority of restrictions have been lifted, it is important that we do all we can to keep everyone safe as the new term begins, particularly with the rising number of cases being reported. As a result, we have thought carefully in our risk assessment about those measures which need to be kept in place. Our procedures will be reviewed on an ongoing basis and further changes may be made at the end of September.

We encourage adults to wear masks as social distancing is so difficult around the entrances and exits of school.

Parent and Carer Guidance: September 2021

This guidance has been produced to support all members of our St. Catherine's community in their best endeavours to continue to keep us as safe as possible while some risk of coronavirus remains a part of our daily lives. By acting collectively and responsibly, we can minimise risk to individuals, the community and the NHS. We all have a moral and civic duty to do all we can to reduce risk from Covid-19 and play our part.

Notwithstanding the success of the NHS vaccination programme, vaccination alone will not be effective. Vaccines have been developed to work against current strains of the virus. However, minimising infection rates goes hand in hand with vaccination. Viruses mutate more with the more people infected. Preventing mutations that could be more deadly, contagious and resistant to vaccines goes hand in hand with the vaccination programme. Minimal infection will also support high attendance for children and staff.

Please note that the procedures outlined in this document reflect those in place to begin the school year. Measures in place are likely to evolve and change in line with any changes in local or national advice or any changes to our school circumstances in respect to Covid-19.

Attendance, Managing Illness and Infection Control

The only reason for a child to be absent will be if they are unwell. We ask all parents and carers not to send in children with any of the wider symptoms of Coronavirus and respect the 48-hour rule for sickness or diarrhoea, in place to reduce sickness absence.

Colds and flu are highly contagious and spread by sneezing. Families can help by teaching children to blow their nose and use a tissue and by sending their child to school with their own tissues so they can catch it, kill it, bin it. Norovirus and Flu are a cause for concern this year and we are encouraging and supporting staff flu

vaccinations. Hand hygiene can mitigate contagion and families can help by supporting good hand washing habits at home.

Attendance will be maximised in school if children with symptoms of coronavirus, flu, or winter sickness bug (norovirus) are kept at home until they are well enough to be in school.

In the event that a child or staff member becomes unwell with COVID-19 symptoms, there is a designated isolation room for them to remain supervised until collected by a parent or carer.

In school, we will continue to take a range of infection control measures, including:

- Minimising contact between year groups.
- Cleaning hands thoroughly, and regularly, throughout the school day.
- Minimising contact with individuals who have coronavirus symptoms
- Ensuring good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach
- Good ventilation in classrooms
- Cleaning frequently touched surfaces regularly

Drop-off procedures (start of school day)

The main pick up and drop off location will remain to be on the school playground, entering through the normal green gates. We will continue to have a one-way system to access and leave the playground. We ask that people enter through the main green gates and then leave through the larger red gates (the same procedure from the previous academic year). We will continue to have blue barriers to assist with the flow of people entering and leaving the playground.

Please know that there will be staff on hand to help children and adults with knowing where to go and following the procedures set out.

Year 6

Children may enter their classrooms between 8.30am and 8.45am through the Year 6 side door entrances by walking down the path alongside the community centre. A staff member will be there to welcome children in and show them where to go.

Years 1 to 5

Children may enter the playground between 8.30am and 8.45am and walk straight into their classrooms. For older children, we ask that parents and carers say goodbye at the school gate and then send their child in independently. For younger children, one parent is able to walk onto the playground, say goodbye to their child at the end of the blue barriers and then leave the playground promptly as their child walks to their classroom.

Reception

During the introductory half-day sessions for Reception, we ask that children enter the school through the side gate next to our new main entrance on the other side of St. Catherine's Church. This is where children will be collected at the end of their session too. There will be staff on hand ready to help and show your child where to go.

Once children are then attending school full time, like other year groups, they may enter the playground between 8.30 and 8.45am with a parent or carer and a member of staff will be waiting on the playground near the play equipment to welcome them into school. We ask that, at this point, the parent or carer says goodbye to their child and then allows them to walk the rest of the short distance to their classroom supported by members of staff.

Nursery

During introductory shorter Nursery sessions at the beginning of the term, we ask that Nursery children enter the school through the side gate next to our new main entrance on the other side of St. Catherine's Church. There will be staff on hand ready to help and show your child where to go.

Once children are attending their full/part-time places fully, Nursery parents and carers are able to accompany their child to the Nursery entrance across the main playground at 8.50am and then leave the playground promptly. If your child attends nursery on a part time basis, drop of and collection on Wednesday lunchtime will be via the new Main Entrance.

Pick-up procedures (end of school day)

Nursery

Children can be collected from the Nursery door at 2.50pm.

Procedures outlined above are for when Nursery children are in school for their full allocated placement time.

Reception and KS1 (Year 1 and Year 2)

Children will be lined up on the playground by 3pm. At this time, we will welcome parents and carers onto the playground to collect their child from their class line before then leaving the playground together promptly.

Procedures outlined above are for when Reception children are in school full-time.

Years 3, 4 and 5

Children will be lined up on the playground by 3.10pm. At this time, we will welcome parents and carers onto the playground to collect their child from their class line before then leaving the playground together promptly.

Year 6

Children will be dismissed from the side entrance of the community centre at 3.10pm. If your child has permission to then walk home alone, you must inform your child's class teacher in writing via a letter or email through the school office. Otherwise, parents and carers will be able to collect their child by meeting them to the right of the entrance to the community centre.

Uniform and what to bring to school

We ask that your child wears their full school uniform to school each day, other than the two days they have P.E. lessons. On these days, we ask that children come into school wearing their P.E. kits. You will be informed of your child's P.E. days during the first week of term.

Your child should bring to school:

- Their lunch (unless having a school dinner)
- A healthy snack: this should be fruit or breadsticks (KS2 children only)
- A coat
- Small pack of tissues and hand sanitiser, if they wish
- Labelled water bottle with still unflavoured water in
- Small School bag

Please ensure ALL items are clearly labelled.

Children should not bring into school:

- Pencil cases or extra stationery
- Toys, including fidget toys
- Jewellery
- Mobile phones or other similar devices

If your child is in Year 6 and has permission to walk to and from school alone, they are permitted to bring a mobile phone into school on request from parents/carers, however, this must be given to their class teacher at the beginning of the school day. The mobile phone must not be used on the school premises, including while waiting to enter school in the morning or when leaving school at the end of the day, and must be switched off. Children can then collect their phone from their teacher at the end of the school day. They must not use their phone until off the school premises.

Mixing year groups

Mixing between year groups will be limited but 'bubbles' will now be extended to phase groups. Some activities (worship, tuition, play times, enrichment and clubs) will involve children from different classes within a phase mixing. Our school is split into four phases: Early Years (Nursery and Reception), Key Stage One (Year 1 and 2), Lower Key Stage Two (Year 3 and 4) and Upper Key Stage Two (Year 5 and 6).

From September in considering risk/benefit, educational benefits will be given a higher priority than when coronavirus cases were at their height and reflecting national restrictions being eased.

When choosing to mix children from different year groups we will balance risk with benefit, taking the following into consideration:

- What is the educational benefit of children from different classes mixing?
- What are the risks of not mixing to children's learning and achievement?
- What are the risks and benefits from children playing across a wider group?
- What would the impact for children, staff and the community be of them testing positive for coronavirus as a consequence of mixing in school?

Mixed groups will almost always be within a phase and we will distance children as far as possible and be mindful of mitigations such as ventilation.

From September we will allow children to play in their phase groups, across the four classes, outside where risk is lower.

Extra-curricular and enrichment

Extra-curricular and enrichment activities, including Forest School, will run in phase groups, where possible, to minimise mixing between additional year groups.

'Meet The Teacher' event

Within the first few weeks of the new school year, you will receive a video alongside year group-specific information for your child. Parents and carers will be able to submit any questions after this and we will then collate Q&A documents to ensure all information is covered to support everyone.

Google Classroom: Key Stage One and Two

New Google Classroom year group pages will be set up shortly and the pages will again be used for setting homework and any remote education, should your child need to self-isolate due to Covid-19, but be well enough to do their school work. For children in Years 2 to 6, children should be able to log into Google Classroom using the same email and password from last year.

Parents and carers of children in Year 1 will receive login details in due course when the year group begins to use this platform.

Meetings between staff and parents

We are now able to permit face-to-face meetings, however, to protect both staff and parents and carers, it is important to limit these where possible to ensure the safety of all. Any face-to-face meetings that do take place will be required to be in line with school guidance and parents and carers will be informed of this before-hand.

We do not, however, want this to reduce communication between staff and parents and we ask that you contact the school office if you would like to speak to your

child's class teacher. We are still able to meet via Zoom or speak over the phone too.

Bounce Well-Being Sessions

Children in Year 1 to Year 6 will continue to take part in Bounce well-being sessions to help with transition into new year groups and to continue the fantastic well-being learning started in the Summer Term. These sessions will take place in September and October. Children in Reception will also be introduced to Bounce well-being sessions during this period.

How might my child be affected if there is a positive Covid-19 case in their class or year group?

The requirement to isolate will be in line with current government and public health guidance at the time. We do not anticipate being advised to close classes but will liaise with and respond to guidance from Manchester public health. As this document outlines, there are still a number of procedures in place to minimising mixing of children outside phase groups and to reduce the spread of illnesses.

If your child is required to self-isolate due to Covid-19, remote education will be provided through Google Classroom for KS1 and KS2 children and through ParentMail for children in Nursery and Reception. We ask that you inform the school office promptly and then teachers will endeavour to set learning tasks within 24 hours of being informed that your child is self-isolating due to a positive test.

Play Time and Lunch Time

Children will spend their time on the playground in phase groups and will be able to roam freely across the space. There will be the usual year group time tables in place for sports activities and for use of our new playground equipment.

At the beginning of term, we will work toward all the children in Reception-Year 4 eating their lunches in the school hall in phase groups. Children in Year 5 and 6 will eat their lunches in the classroom before they then spend the rest of their lunch time on the playground.

If you have any questions regarding any of the information provided, please email the school office. We look forward to welcoming you all back to school very soon for the start of a new and exciting academic year!

Kind regards,

Miss Chwastek and Miss Quiligotti