



Frequently Asked Questions: Parents and Carers – June 2020

What should I do if my child is identified as 'critically extremely vulnerable'?

You must follow medical guidance on this and, according to current guidance, any child classed as 'critically extremely vulnerable' should not yet attend school. If we are not already aware of your child's situation, please let us know. You will know if your child is identified as 'critically extremely vulnerable' as they will have received a shielding letter or similar guidance from their doctor.

What should I do if someone in my household is identified as 'critically extremely vulnerable'?

Again, you must follow medical guidance on this and, according to current guidance, any child or staff member who lives with someone who is identified as 'critically extremely vulnerable' should only attend if stringent social distancing can be met. Social distancing will be in place in school where possible but cannot be absolutely guaranteed between children. If we are not already aware that this is the case for your family, please let us know. You will know if a family member is identified as 'critically extremely vulnerable' as they will have received a shielding letter or similar guidance from their doctor.

My child is not classed as 'critically extremely vulnerable' but has a medical condition that means they are vulnerable. Should they return to school?

Each child's and family's situation is different and therefore we ask you to obtain medical guidance from your GP for the most up-to-date advice. If you would also like to discuss your child's position with a member of the Senior Leadership Team, please contact the office via email and a member of staff will make contact.

My child has an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP). What provision will be put in place?

A member of the Leadership Team will be in touch before your child's year group's return to look at the best provision for your child, based on their current needs and their EHC plan. Individual risk assessments will be completed to ensure the health and safety of your child and to look at any further arrangements that need to be put in place to best support your child and their transition back into school. The Senior Leadership Team and school Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDSCO) will review the potential impact to your child's wellbeing and safety to themselves and others due to the changes to routine or the way in which the provision is delivered. Strategies will be identified to reduce any risk to your child's wellbeing and safety during the pandemic and this will be shared with parents.



I am worried about how my child has coped with school closure. They are highly anxious about returning to school. I'm not sure what is best for them regarding returning to school?

Every child and their family are having an experience that is unique to them during the period of school closure. Some will be finding the experience very positive and others may be highly anxious about the pandemic or struggling with limited social contact. It is of utmost importance to us that we do our best to provide the right support for your child and adjust our provision accordingly. If you feel that your child will need additional emotional support when they return to school, please email the school office so that a member of the Leadership Team can be in contact to discuss your concerns.

If our child does not attend initially from the set date for their year group, are we able to change our decision so our child attends at a later date in the term?

Yes, you can but they will not be able to turn up for school immediately. If you change your mind then you must contact the school office who will advise you of a date that your child can return. This is so we can ensure we are prepared for their arrival and to welcome them fully.

If I don't want to send my child back to school will I get fined?

No. If you do decide to keep your child at home during June and July then there will be no pressure from school to attend. We recognise that this is a very personal decision. The government have clearly stated that there will be no fines for non-attendance.

Will school be open all week?

School will be open for children from Monday to Thursday each week. Every Friday, staff will have their PPA time, planning time for additional year groups to start school, and further cleaning will be in place too. For children attending school when their year group has returned, they will attend on a two-day basis (either Monday-Tuesday or Wednesday-Thursday). This is to help us endeavour to return all year groups on a part-time capacity before the summer. Our key worker provision will be open Monday-Friday.



I have children in several year groups. What do I do regarding different drop-off times and pick-up times for each year group?

We understand that different timings would make the school day very difficult for parents with two or more children in school. We therefore ask you to bring in both/all of your children (if their year groups have returned to school) at the LATEST drop-off time in the morning. At the end of the school day, we ask that you collect both/all of your children at the EARLIEST pick-up time. Please email the school office to let them know that this will be the case once you have two or more children back in school so that staff can ensure they are ready for the correct time.

I have children in several year groups. Will this be taken into account organising children in their bubble groups?

Yes. If the first of your children returning to school is in a bubble group attending school on Monday and Tuesday, for example, we will then ensure that your other child/children are put into the Monday/Tuesday bubble group for their year group too.

Can my child bring a reading book home?

Unfortunately not. Again, this is to uphold strict health and safety measures and protect all staff and children. We have shared a range of online and interactive reading resources, particularly for younger children, and will continue to do so to ensure reading is still a strong focus both in school and at home.

What are the arrangements for dropping my child off at school?

Only one adult per household will be able to drop off and collect their child.

Government guidance states that children should either, walk, cycle or drive with a parent. This is to support them in avoiding the temptation to meet up with their friends.

Your child is not allowed to come to school on their own, unless they are in Year 6 and you have provided written permission.

Childminders are permitted to drop-off and pick-up children.

We ask that bringing other children to school when picking up your child is limited and only done when no other arrangements are possible.

Drop off and collection must be during the appointed time slot you are given in order to minimise the risk of cross contamination.

Will my child be with their usual teacher/teaching assistant?

It is our intention that each bubble will have two members of staff, usually a teacher and a teaching assistant. Where possible, this will include your child's class teacher.



What is the maximum class size?

The maximum class size for KS1 and KS2 children is 15, although it is highly likely that numbers will be lower than this due to some parents making the decision to not yet send their children back to school. In Early Years, class sizes will be much smaller and will be of sizes of around 7-10 children.

Will it be the normal curriculum being taught?

Although it will not be the same teaching and learning in place before the lockdown, the teachers will be teaching as much of the year group curriculum in a fun and engaging way as they can. A key focus of learning when returning to school will be personal, social and health education. This will help children to process what has been happening in the world around them and focus on their mental health.

Home learning will continue five days a week. The learning set online will be covered in the classroom for those children accessing part-time provision. Teachers will make it clear which aspects of learning will be covered on the days children are in school, and which aspects should be completed at home.

If my child stays at home, will we receive the same online home learning?

Children will continue to receive home learning as set throughout school closure. Teachers will, however, not be available to answer questions on Google Classroom as regularly once their year group is able to return to school.

Please also keep in mind that, even if your child's year group has not yet returned to school, your child's teachers and teaching assistants will not only be setting online learning but will also be working in school to staff our key worker provision. In addition, they will be setting up for the return of your child's year group and resourcing learning for them.

How will personal hygiene be managed?

Toilets and sinks will be allocated to each 'bubble', where possible, and labelled clearly. Younger children will be escorted to the toilet to ensure they do not mix with other children there and that they use the correct toilet and sink facilities allocated to their 'bubble'.

There will also be additional cleaning of these facilities during the day.

Frequent hand washing will be in place, including at key identified times of the day.

We cannot say that some resources will not be handled by more than one child, particularly in Early Years and Year 1. We have spent a long time teaching our youngest children that sharing is good. Children will be encouraged to maintain good hand hygiene.



Will children be required to socially distance?

Yes. Children will receive frequent reminders about social distancing and will be reminded of the reasons behind this. This will be done in an age-appropriate and engaging way that children can understand.

Although children in Early Years (Nursery and Reception) and Year 1 will have frequent reminders about social distancing, this will not be strictly enforced due to their age and the way in which they learn through play.

Will staff be wearing PPE equipment?

Whilst the government have stated that "it will not be necessary or required that staff use PPE equipment while they are in school" we know that many are highly anxious about the risks of cross contamination. Therefore, we have provided all staff with PPE and they have the choice to wear it if they wish. PPE will always be worn by staff administering first aid or when a child displays symptoms of COVID-19.

What will happen at lunchtimes?

Children will eat their packed lunch in their classroom. For children who usually have a hot meal, a packed lunch grab bag will be prepared for them if parents/carers have ordered one. If your child is on FSM or universal infant free school meals (Rec/ Y1 & Y2) there will be no charge.

What can my child bring with them?

Your child should bring their lunch in a disposable bag (unless they are having a grab bag lunch purchased from school) and also bring in their water bottle. Please also check the weather each day and use your judgement as to whether your child needs to bring their coat into school.

Each child will be provided with their own resource pack in a plastic wallet. This will be labelled and will contain all of the equipment they need for learning e.g. pencil, ruler, support mats, exercise book, etc.

What should my child wear?

Children are not expected to wear uniform and are expected to wear their school P.E. kit instead. Trainers or pumps will be best as we intend to spend a lot of time outside. It is expected that children will wear clean clothes each day.

Will the organisation of my child's classroom change?

Yes and this is to ensure the health and safety of all children and staff in school. Tables, furniture and equipment not needed will be removed to provide more space for children to socially distance. Soft furnishings and resources that cannot be cleaned frequently will also be removed or not used in the classroom.



What happens if I need to contact my child's teacher?

No face-to-face contact will be available with members of staff. Please leave a message with the school office (preferably via email) and they will get back to you as soon as they are able.

What happens if my child has symptoms of COVID-19 while in school?

Should your child display symptoms of COVID-19, they will immediately be taken to a designated isolation room and will be looked after by a member of staff wearing PPE equipment. Parents/carers will be contacted immediately and it is important that you then arrange for your child to be collected from school as soon as possible. Please then keep us updated on your child's condition. Your child will then be required to self-isolate and will need to be tested for the virus. If the test shows they do not have COVID-19, they will be able to return to school the next day. If they do have the virus, they will need to self-isolate for the recommended period, as will any members of their household.

What will happen if a member of my child's class bubble has COVID-19 or has symptoms?

If a child or staff member in your child's bubble tests positive for COVID-19, you will be contacted and all children and staff in this bubble will be required to self-isolate for 14 days, even if they do not have symptoms. If other members of the bubble then develop symptoms, it is important they are tested as soon as possible. Current guidance states that children/staff only need to self-isolate if another member tests positive.

If a child or staff member has symptoms, they will not be permitted to be in school.

Please note that this information is based on current guidance and this may change.

How will my child know the new expectations in school?

Teachers will explain this very clearly to children on their first day in school in an age-appropriate and engaging manner. There will also be clear and child-friendly signage around school which will be shown to children.

Each child will also be sent a video personalised for their year group a few days before they are due to start back at school. They will receive an information booklet too. This will help to explain the expectations before children return to school and will show what their classroom will look like, how they will enter school, etc. This is aimed to help children feel more confident about returning to school.

Will my child be able to mix with children in another bubble?

Unfortunately not. This is so that we can ensure the highest levels of health and safety for all children and staff. The reasons for this will be explained to children to help them understand this.



Will there be increased cleaning regimes in school?

Yes. We have increased the frequency of cleaners on site, including throughout the school day, in order to ensure we meet our strict health and safety standards.

My child is in Year 6. Will there be any of the usual end of year celebrations?

Unfortunately, due to social distancing measures, many of the usual Year 6 celebrations will not be able to take place in the same way as usual. Staff are thinking creatively about how we can still celebrate children's time at St. Catherine's and will be in touch with Year 6 parents and carers separately in due course.

How will the 'bubble' groups be organised. Will friendships be considered?

'Bubbles' have been organised using a number of factors including friendship groups, children returning to school, current class dynamics, sibling groups, etc.

The 'bubble' groups will be decided by year group teachers who know the children best in a school context. They will use their professional judgement to make the best decisions and consider a wide range of factors. Please do not contact your child's teacher to make personal requests.