

# ST MARK'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Headteacher: Ms Laura Kelsey BA (Hons), PGCE, CEPQH



Friday, 22 May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

When we agreed our school values as a shared school community, we had never anticipated needing them in the context we are now in. **Thank you;** every one of you has shown **understanding, respect, perseverance, kindness, honesty** and, most importantly, **love** to do your very best at home in a truly challenging time. Thank you so much.

I am now writing to outline our plans for wider re-opening in line with Department for Education advice to resume school attendance for pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6. Thank you for filling in our survey last week, it has allowed us to plan for how many children we expect back in.



## Introduction

Thank you for all of your questions and supportive words so far. One main issue regards social distancing – DfE guidance confirms in writing that **younger children can not be expected to keep 2m apart**. Risk management is designed to reduce the risk of infection using a number of other protocols, not 2m social distancing between children. For children in Reception and Year 1, 2m social distancing is widely agreed as being unfair and unrealistic. Schools in England have largely followed a model of creating 'bubbles' where each class consists of 15 pupils maximum. Our risk assessment process has analysed all areas of the school setting and procedures, with a focus on limiting the risk of infection from Covid-19.



## Important reminders

- Based on current evidence, schools can not guarantee to be free of risks from Covid-19.
- Children should not attend if they have a cough, temperature or loss of taste/smell.
- Children should stay at home for 14 days if anyone in their household has these symptoms.
- All absences from school are currently authorised with a special register code for Covid-19 closure (children are attending their learning at home).
- Children of parents who are **clinically extremely vulnerable** should not attend



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## Procedures

We have strategies planned to greatly reduce contact between children. Each bubble will be separate at all times. Adults will maintain 2m social distancing from each other, children and parents. Year 6 pupils *will be* working apart with their own individual workstations and resources – it is generally accepted that children at this age can maintain this distancing more effectively.

***We acknowledge the need to plan this one week at a time*** – currently there is not a track and trace app or process, the British Medical Association has advised against wider opening and the teaching unions argue that June 1<sup>st</sup> is too early. We are not the medical experts but we know that many families and children want to be back in school, around their friends and in their school learning environment - even though this will look different. We have followed DfE guidance and West Sussex County Council strategy and risk management to reduce hazards of Covid-19 as much as possible in the current context.

***Based on the current guidance, we expect school to be open for children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6, and children of key workers, from Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June.***

Our Bluebell, Fern and Laurel teams will be caring for children in their usual learning space with their usual teachers and teaching assistants to maximise well-being, reassurance, consistency and the best learning for the children returning. We have made some videos for the children and yourselves to see what these spaces look like. For younger children, please share this often as part of the transition back into school. This will make the first day back much easier as they will know what to expect. <https://www.st-marks.w-sussex.sch.uk/return-to-school-videos/>

Key worker and vulnerable children will be working in Bramble class with their own chair, table and pack of resources for the week, supported by Mrs Henderson and



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Mrs Bean and accessing the learning programme on the school website being shared with children learning at home.

## Procedures

Part of risk management involves staggered timings and new procedures for arrival and collection times at school. We have produced videos of drop off and pick up time so you can see how this will work. We will be using the church yard for both. Please enter through the gabled gate entrance and make your way up to the gate by the school path for drop off and the church for pick up. There will be a one way system through the churchyard and markings on the floor to help with social distancing. Please ensure that only a maximum of one adult comes with your child and leaves as soon as their child enters the school, through the one-way system. If you have siblings in more than one group, you can choose which slot to use as they can go into school together. **Please do not arrive before or after your scheduled drop off/pick up time.**

Year Group	Drop off	Pick up
Reception	9am	3pm
Year 1	8:50	3:15pm
Year 6	8:40	Can walk themselves out with permission via path
Key worker and vulnerable	8:30	3:30pm

We feel that Year 6's could sensibly walk themselves out of school at the end of the day to your car or to where you are waiting. If you are happy to allow your Year 6 child to do this, please fill in this google permission form.

[Please Click Here - Year 6 Parents Only](#)

**Please note that sadly parents cannot enter the school site** and should not gather or interact closer than 2 metres apart when waiting outside.

## Lunch time and play time

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Each class will remain separate at all times. Break and Lunch times will be held at different times. **Hot meals will be provided for all pupils in Reception, Year 1, Year 6 and children of key workers – if you require this then please email the school office so that Mrs Richardson can order enough as per the email earlier in the week.** Your children are welcome to bring their own packed lunch if they prefer.

## Clothing

We are planning to spend as much time as possible outside whilst remaining in our bubbles. Because of this, children can wear their home clothes and sensible footwear. Please make sure your children are dressed weather appropriately including sun cream and a hat on hot days or a raincoat if it looks like it will be wet. The current advice is that clothing needs to be washed frequently. Please do not wear any jewellery to school and ensure shoulder length or longer hair is tied up.

## Bringing items into school

Please only bring a named water bottle, lunchbox (if needed), named coat (if needed), and bag (if needed). Children do not need PE kits as they should be wearing clothes and shoes they can run around in. Please do not bring any toys in from home as they will not be allowed. Please bring home packs, the plastic wallets given to children to take home before our school closure, back to school, so that children can work with their own equipment.

## Toilets

Only one child in the school will be allowed to go to the toilet at any time throughout the school. Each bubble has a walkie talkie to check no one else is in the toilet. This will stop contact in the toilets and corridors. The toilets will also be wiped down hourly and children will be asked to wash their hands when they get back to the classrooms.

## First Aid

First-aiders have no option but to be within 2m of children if first aid needs to be administered, such as to clean a cut safely. We have Personal Protective Equipment for this task. The first aider will wear the government-issued face mask/visor and disposable gloves (already part of our first aid procedure).



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## Hygiene

To ensure that our hygiene measures protect our community we have

- Arranged for a deep clean of the school site during half term
- Arranged for extra cleaning during and at the end of the school day
- We have removed excess furniture and equipment including soft furnishings and toys that are hard to clean, as advised by the DfE
- Hand washing will remain a high priority.

## Wraparound care

Unfortunately due to the need to keep to these small bubbles of no more than 15 children and no mixing within these, we will not be able to offer breakfast club or after school clubs. I know this will be difficult for working parents but we cannot follow the government guidelines to keep everyone safe if we do run them.

## Home learning

If your child is not returning to school, there will still be home learning available on the class pages of the website. Please note that teachers will be in school teaching children all day so they may not be able to answer emails as quickly. The amount of home learning will be less also as what we are providing currently takes a lot of teachers' time. There may be more signposting to the government home learning such as Oak Academy and BBC Bitesize as well as a weekly overview of St. Mark's home learning.

We will review the situation weekly in line with Government guidance and stay in touch about the next steps for wider opening. At this stage no guarantees can be made about when and how this will look.

Thank you, stay safe and speak to you soon.

Kind regards,

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