



## St. John the Baptist Catholic Primary School

*We will prepare the way by loving, living and learning with the Lord*

13.7.20

Dear Parents/ Carers,

We have now received further guidance from the Department for Education about their intentions for all children to return to school in September. This letter is being sent to share our detailed plans of how we intend to reopen, as safely as possible, for all children at St. John's.

### **Legal Requirement**

During lockdown, parents and carers have either been given the choice to decide whether their eligible child should return to school or have had to keep their child at home.

From September 1<sup>st</sup>, it is your legal responsibility to ensure that your child attends school. Failure to do so could result in penalty notices being issued and potential fines. The government believe that it is safe for children to attend school so it is no longer a choice as to whether or not they should attend. If you do have concerns or anxieties about your child returning to school, please do not hesitate to contact us and we will share our risk assessments with you in detail, to hopefully put your minds at rest.

### **'Class Bubbles'**

From September children will attend school as part of 'class bubbles.' Each bubble will have their own classroom and will have limited staff allocated to work with them. We will then do everything possible to avoid bubbles having close contact with others. Therefore, each bubble will have a separate school start and finish time; their own playground zone and will eat separately from other groups at lunchtimes. There will be no whole school assemblies or Masses or any whole school events for the foreseeable future. Organising school using separate class bubbles will significantly reduce the risk of cross infection. It also means that, if we do experience any positive confirmations of Covi-19, for either children or staff, we can identify a class bubble for self-isolation and continue operating as normal for the rest of the school.

### **Hygiene and Protective Equipment**

Our school is always immaculately clean but we have increased our cleaning and hygiene practices still further to reduce the risk of cross infection. All areas used by children will be cleaned more than once a day. When a class bubble eats lunch in our dining hall, it will be cleaned before the next bubble uses it. All learning equipment will be cleaned after use and children will have their own individual pencil case with their own pencil, pen, glue, scissors etc.

The government does not advise children or staff to wear PPE (personal protective equipment) when in school so children will not be permitted to wear masks or gloves. Social distancing will still be in place between staff and children and for children as they travel around school. Distancing has been reduced, in line with guidance, within each classroom but from September, desks will be arranged in rows for Y2 – Y6, as a further distancing measure.

We ask that you send your child to school with the minimum amount of possessions: a lunch box if needed; book bag and coat when required. We are now permitted to begin sending reading books home again and homework books will be re-introduced. We ask that you send your child with a water bottle each day (our water fountains are currently out of use) and that they take the bottle

home again each day. Any bottles left in school will be disposed of at the end of each school day. This is to reduce the risk of any cross infection.

### PE Arrangements

Class bubbles can still partake in PE lessons, however to reduce the amount of personal possessions kept in school we will be asking children to attend school in their PE kits for the whole of the day, when PE is timetabled. All children should wear the correct St John the Baptist PE kit and are permitted to wear trainers **on these days only**. As we will be returning to school in the Autumn, your child can wear a tracksuit to help them keep warm. Tracksuits must be **non- branded** and either **black or blue only**. For all other days, full and correct school uniform should be worn.

### Behaviour

In response to the coronavirus pandemic, we have added to our Behaviour Policy and have a specific Covid-19 Home/ School Agreement. This will be emailed to every family. You must read the agreement and share it with your child. **You must also return a response** via Microsoft Forms (this link will be sent in a text) which confirms that you and your child agrees with the terms of our Covid-19 Home/ School Agreement. This is to ensure that everyone understands the vital importance of social distancing and other behaviours that will help everyone stay safe. **You must send back your agreement before your child returns to school**. Your support in this area is appreciated.

### Staggered School Day Start and End Times

It is vital that we avoid any mass gatherings on our school site and that we do everything possible to limit contact between separate class bubbles. We will therefore, be introducing staggered start and finish times for our school day. We ask that you do everything possible to adhere strictly to your child's start and finish time. If you do not support us in this area you will be contacted by a member of our school senior leadership team.

We do recognise that for some families, you may have a child in more than one year group. Unfortunately, this potential inconvenience is unavoidable but we hope you understand that we cannot compromise the safety of our children.

Please see the table below for our new start and finish times:

Year Group	Start Time	Finish Time	Entry/ Collection Point
Early Years	9.00am	3.00pm	Key Stage One Gate
Year One	8.55am	3.15pm	Key Stage One Gate
Year Two	8.50am	3.10pm	Key Stage One Gate
Year Three	8.45am	3.05pm	Key Stage One Gate
Year Four	8.50am	3.10pm	Key Stage Two Gate
Year Five	8.45am	3.05pm	Key Stage Two Gate
Year Six	8.55am	3.15pm	Key Stage Two Gate

Class bubbles will also have staggered morning break and lunch break times to enable us to reduce potential contact.

We assure you that all classes will still receive over and above the legal requirement for total teaching time each week, despite these changes. **Please also be aware that school will again be closing at 2.00pm on Friday, each week**, this will allow for extra deep cleaning time.

### **Breakfast and After School Club**

We will continue to offer this provision but children attending will have to follow social distancing expectations. This means that we will have to operate with reduced numbers. Parents/ carers who are in full time employment or full time education will be given priority, from September 1<sup>st</sup>. We ask that you continue to book in advance to enable us to plan staffing and to ensure safe social distancing practices are in place.

### **Contact with School**

It is really important that we maintain a strong home/ school partnership. However, we ask that, where possible, you make contact with school to share any queries or concerns via telephone or email. School leaders or class teachers will do their best to contact you back as soon as possible.

### **Curriculum**

We hope that you recognise the incredible effort made by our teachers to provide the best possible home learning opportunities during this very challenging time. When your children return to school we recognise that for some there will be significant gaps in their learning and for others they may struggle to return to normal learning routines. We also recognise that many children will be feeling very anxious about returning to school after such a long time. Please rest assured that we have planned a detailed 'Recovery Curriculum' which will aim to fill any learning gaps but, more importantly, will cater for every child's social and emotional needs to ensure they have a successful return to full time education. More information about our recovery curriculum will follow in due course.

And Finally...

I must apologise for the length of this letter but it is important that you feel fully informed. We are all really looking forward to welcoming every child back to school in September – we've really missed them! It will be wonderful to hear all of our classrooms come back to life and to see you, our school community, back as well.

We do understand that as parents and carers you may feel anxious about your child returning to school but we hope that you will feel reassured that we have followed every government guideline strictly and have put an enormous amount of work into making sure we have done everything to make St John's as safe as we possibly can.

Yours Faithfully

*Mr. I Gallagher*

Headteacher