



Newsletter Week beginning 13th July 2020 St Michael's

As we near the end of another school year, we reflect on what an extraordinary year it has been! We did not know back in September how, half way through the year, we would be totally rethinking what school would look like, that parents would have to take on the challenge of home learning, that schools would be designing virtual classrooms, keeping in touch with families, organising meals, grappling with huge amounts of government guidance and caring for children in school. We have all had to use technology more and find a new normal under lockdown.

We are busy planning for September bearing in mind the latest guidance from the government. Things might still change. It is important for everyone to know that school will continue to be a bit different in September and to prepare our children for this. Please be understanding that we have to follow government guidance- it continues to be a difficult time for school as we work to keep everyone safe.

It is important to remember that we want the return to school to be a happy one. We are very excited to be having all the children back and can't wait to see them. We will work hard to make it a positive experience for the children.

Information is presented in a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) format that we ask you to read with your child to help the return back to school.

Some of the major changes are also included in this newsletter so that they are not missed.

Main changes to school in September:

- Classrooms will be arranged differently to normal. Tables will be facing the front and because of space, they are likely to be in rows.
- Children will need to keep their distance from the teacher, but not necessarily from their classmates.
- Lunch will be eaten in class.
- The start and finish times of school have to be staggered so that we don't have lots of children and parents arriving at the same time.
- Children will have their personal equipment pack to minimize sharing.
- Assemblies will be in class, sometimes on Zoom if it is led by a member of staff other than the class teacher.
- If we have a positive confirmed case of Covid-19, the whole class will have to self-isolate for 14 days.
- We are preparing home learning in the case of self-isolation or local lockdown. It will be of enormous benefit to have a laptop or device for your child to use if this is the case.
- We will run a small Breakfast and After School Club for St Michael's children only until at least half term. Providers must try maintain the children's school bubble so we will limit numbers to enable this. Your child cannot attend if you have not booked on Parentpay.
- After school sports activities will run with fewer children outside or in the hall, socially distanced.
- Children will not be allowed mobile phones on the school site from September.
- Our Behaviour and Relationship Policy will have some major changes. It is vital that parents and children understand that we cannot use additional adults in certain circumstances and that behaviours which put other people at risk cannot be managed in school.
- We will keep children as class bubbles in the main but this may increase to year group bubbles over time.

Please read the full FAQs for more information.

Teaching Assistant – temporary post available

We are looking for a teaching assistant at St Michael's for one year. Possible candidates need to be able to evidence further qualifications, preferably higher level as we need someone who can support in class and lead Maths and English interventions. Please contact the school and look on our website for an application form.

How to talk to your child about coming back to school.

It has been great to welcome so many children back to school this side of the summer break. However, there will be some children who will be returning in September who have been out of school for a long time and may be feeling very anxious.

The newspapers and media paint a very worrying picture of how the children will be falling behind, going backwards or have big gaps in their learning. If children worry that this is the case, they will be very anxious indeed. As a school, we are certain that they will soon be back learning and making good progress. Teachers are trained to work out where children are in their learning and bring them on from that point. We will make sure that we talk positively about what we are doing in school, that these past weeks have not been wasted or damaging. If children believe that this pandemic will affect them long term, their well-being and mental health will be harmed.

We are planning our curriculum to make sure we revisit and reinforce skills and understanding, so please reassure your child that the school will understand children might be a bit wobbly and not quite school shaped but that they will be back in the swing of things soon!

Beginning and end of school day in for September

We will have a soft start to the day – children can arrive between 8.30 – 9.00am and go straight into class. They will not be supervised on the playground or let into school before that. We ask that everyone tries really hard to maintain distance during these busy times.

Year 3 parents ONLY can come onto the school site but not the playground. The children will go straight through the side gate near the angel carving and into class. Adults will be there to support them and make sure they get to the right place!

Year 4 and 5 children will head straight into class via the side gate near the angel carving or from the footpath.

Year 6 will need to enter the school by the side gates along the foot path. They will go straight into their year 6 block.

At the end of the day, year 3 will be leaving school between 3.05 and 3.10pm. The rest of the school will leave between 3.15 and 3.20pm. We ask that ONLY year 3 parents come on to the school site and wait near the angel carving.

Annual school reports

Your child's school report will be sent via email this year. Should you want a hard copy please contact the school office and a copy will be printed off for you to collect.

Free School Meals – has your situation changed?

Some people's working circumstances have changed over lockdown. Unfortunately, some people have been made redundant and financially they are now in a different position. If your situation has changed you may be entitled to claim free school meals for your child. Contact the school straight away so that we check whether you are eligible and can process this for you. The government is providing food vouchers over the summer holiday for children on free school meals – every little helps!

Mobile phones, social media and Blue Whale

Please be aware that mobile phones will not be allowed in school at all from September. They have caused immense issues and many parents have also shared their concerns with the school. Social media can be helpful – but it can also be a source of deep upset and worry for children. Please make sure you monitor your child's use. We have been alerted to Blue Whale, a very worrying social media group which is believed to be encouraging children to kill themselves. Please check your child's phone.

Breakfast and After School Club

Due to the need to keep children in different classes separate if possible, we have had to limit the numbers attending these clubs. Priority will be given to working parents. Children cannot attend if a space has not been allocated – the school will contact parents for more information should you require a place.

Please return library books

Please drop your library books off in the box at the front of the school.



Goodbye!

It has been great to have many of our year 6 children back in school since the beginning of June. We wish them all the very best as they move to high school and hope they have happy memories of their time at St Michael's. Good luck Year 6!

We say goodbye to Mrs Griffiths, Pastoral Worker, who has been with All Angels' Federation for 16 years. She is taking retirement and we wish her our warmest wishes for the next stage in her life. She will be much missed.

We also say good bye and good luck to Miss Simpson, Teaching Assistant as she starts her teacher training with the UEA. We are in no doubt she will make an excellent teacher.

School closes on Friday 17th July and staff will be carrying out training and preparation on Monday and Tuesday of the following week.

Have a good summer! Keep safe and look after yourselves!

Mrs McCarney
Headteacher