



**St. Michael's V.A. Junior School**  
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1<sup>st</sup> September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that you are well and are enjoying what is left of our summer.

I am writing to you ahead of the children's return to school next week with a few further details and hopefully, reassurances. For some children it has been a very long time since they were at school and we know that returning may not be easy for them. Some things will have to be different, of course, but we are looking forward to seeing all the children so much and will make sure that the return is a positive happy time.

It may help to talk with your child about what school will look like when they come back. Let's run through the day:

- Firstly, the staff will be happy to see them! There will be lots of smiles and "welcome backs"! If your child doesn't know where to go, staff will be very happy to help. Year 3 parents can come onto the school site but to help with congestion, parents of children in other year groups let your child walk in by themselves. There will be a lot of staff around.
- All children will be wearing their school uniform. The government has advised that clean uniform is to be worn and that no additional washing processes are required. (Please see our website for a uniform reminder)
- The children will go straight to class when they arrive in school. For a while we will not be able to let children from different year groups and classes mix. The school start times have been staggered a little to allow for social distancing so check the times in the box at the bottom of this letter.
- Coats, lunch boxes, water bottles and bags will be placed on the back of chairs or under the desk, not in the cloakrooms. Our cloakrooms are very tight spaces! Try to keep the things brought into school to the minimum.
- Children will be in one classroom for all of their lessons and will have an allocated seat. The government have told us to ensure that all children face the front, so tables are mainly organised in lines. If your child needs additional help or an intervention, this will take place in a space allocated only to that class. We will not be sharing spaces.
- The children will be asked to wash their hands/use sanitiser on arrival at the school (and a number of other times throughout the day, like before and after break, lunch time, before and after using the toilet). The school will provide sanitiser, soap, tissues and bins and we will be cleaning touch points and toilets throughout the day.
- The adults in the school will try to maintain a distance from the children. This may not always be easy but talk to your child about not touching the staff or going too close. We know this will be hard and sometimes not possible.
- Children will not mix with other children from other year groups and will remain in their allocated playground zone. Playground equipment will be cleaned daily.
- We will provide all equipment for learning activities e.g. pens, pencils etc. The children will have their own pack of equipment. If any resources have to be shared between classes, this will be cleaned before the next group use it.

- Toilet breaks will be supervised. Social distancing will be maintained as much as we can.
- The teachers have planned lots of exciting activities and lessons. There will also be time for the children to talk about any worries and share concerns if they want to. If we think that your child needs a little extra help with anything then the class TA or class teacher will put some extra support in place.
- Break times will be outside as much as the weather allows. Breaks will be staggered across the school so that children have plenty of space and do not mix with other year groups.
- Lunch will be eaten in the class. We cannot mix children in our dining hall. It is safer to keep classes separate. The children will have time outside as usual. We will still be providing free school meals for children who qualify and meals to buy but the menu has had to be simplified. Make sure meals are ordered on ParentPay.
- On a PE day, the children will come to school in their PE kit. Having to change in school would require class bubbles to be broken, lost items of clothing to be handled and lots of extra items brought into school. The class teacher will let the children know which day is a PE day.
- Unfortunately, we cannot have assemblies in the hall or gather classes together so we will have assemblies via Zoom. We cannot sing either, sadly.
- At the end of the day, the class teacher and TA will bring children out and help them to keep their distance from other children. There will be lots of staff outside to help children at the end of the day. Make sure your child knows where to meet you and that this is following social distancing rules from others.

Here are a few other things you will need to know.

- Teachers and TAs will be providing more oral feedback than marking in books.
- Library books will be issued and when returned they will be quarantined and cleaned before going back on the shelves.
- Staff will be available for phone calls or zoom meetings but we are limiting face to face meetings until further notice. School staff will be outside at the start and end of the day if you have a query.
- Parents/carers and pupils are advised that they should not walk together in large groups. It is preferable that only members of the same household should walk or travel in a car together. Follow government guidance about wearing face masks if you travel to school on a bus.
- We will be teaching children about how to identify Covid-19 symptoms, good hand hygiene and “Catch it, Kill it, Bin it”. We will be using resources recommended by the government and the Local Authority.
- If you or the school feel that your child would benefit from additional pastoral support, we will put this in place.
- We will not be testing children to see what they do or do not know! Teachers are trained to identify what children may need extra support with.
- We will be running some extra-curricular clubs. These will operate with smaller numbers than usual and outside as far as possible. The government recommends that parents consider limiting the additional contacts children have and in particular the number of out of school clubs they attend.
- We have revised our Behaviour Policy in light of Covid-19 for the safety of all. Please support the school during this challenging time.

- If a pupil were to risk the health and safety of others, e.g. spitting, biting, scratching or disruptive behaviour, or not adhering to safety rules, they would not be welcome to attend school and would be sent home.
- If your child needs first aid, staff will wear PPE.
- Children are NOT allowed mobile phones at school.
- Should your child become unwell at school, we will contact you immediately to arrange their collection from school. If a child shows any of the signs of a potential COVID-19 infection, then they will be sent home immediately to prevent the spread of a potential infection to others. It is therefore important that you are able to pick your child up at any point throughout the day. Make sure we have your phone numbers and that you are contactable.
- Should your child or any member of the family have a positive Covid-19 test, we ask that school is informed immediately.
- In the event of someone in the class bubble having a positive test result, the class bubble may have to self-isolate for 14 days in line with government guidance. In the case of this happening the school will provide work and daily contact.

### **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. Staff will be outside to help children get to class. They will not be supervised on the playground or let into school before that. Lessons start at 9am. 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

Thank you for your understanding at this time. You will be aware that the guidance given to school has been constantly changing and all that we are putting in place is for the health and safety of the children and staff. We are so eager to be back to school and looking forward to seeing the children in class.

However, we also understand that some children may be worrying about returning. If you feel this is the case and that more will be needed to support your child, maybe a visit to school before all children return, maybe a zoom call or a chat with a member of the Pastoral Team, then please contact the school if you haven't already informed us in the survey that was sent out. Equally, if there is something that you feel the school should know about your child or their experience during lockdown, just get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

*HJ McCarney*

Mrs Helen McCarney  
Executive Headteacher