



28th May 2020

Dear parents and carers,

I hope you are well and enjoying time together on what would have ordinarily been our summer half-term break.

This letter is incredibly long but it contains **very important information about the next few weeks**, so please read carefully.

To put the following into context I refer to the **key points** of my letter dated 18th May:

- We have been asked to plan for a possible return to school for **more pupils** over the next half term, prioritising **Reception, Year 1 and Year 6** alongside the children of [critical workers](#).
- We are all keen to see children back enjoying the significant benefits of being in school.
- As we look to increase the number of children in school, we want to **ensure the safety of everyone** in our community, so will adjust our way of working.
- Because of the measures in place, it is **not possible for everyone to return at once**.
- A **return will not be 'business as usual'** but we want to make returning children as comfortable and relaxed as possible.
- Children that are not yet able to return at this point are **no less important**, special or loved and we will strive to support our whole community as best we can.

We have carefully considered how best to meet these requirements and our approach has been guided by:

- Consultation with the parent body, staff, Governors and Trustees.
- Taking account of Local Authority and National Government guidance.
- Listening to advice from our Diocesan Board of Education and professional bodies.

Guidance has been considered in the context of our own unique school circumstances and we have conducted our own thorough risk assessment which is available on request.

Having followed due process, we are in a position to begin a gradual return for some eligible pupils from Tuesday 2nd June, and will look to increase that number slowly in the following weeks beginning 8th June and 15th June for more eligible pupils.

We ask for your continued patience throughout this time as we will not be able to welcome back everyone immediately. **Please note, school will be closed to all on Monday 1st June to allow preparations to be made.**

If you are in an eligible group and have indicated you would like to take up a place, we will let you know when this is available for your child.

This strategy is conditional:

- On the Government passing its own [5 key tests](#) at a review on 28th May.
- On regular review of the local and national context.
- On the school being able to maintain [measures](#) to reduce or mitigate risk.

It is important to recognise that the school may, at any time, need to reduce numbers of pupils in school or close entirely as circumstances change. You can track the local context on the [COVID symptom](#) website and contribute valuable information towards the study by downloading the app.

To ensure the safest possible return for children, we have adopted a number of protective measures and changes to our normal school procedures. These are laid out in detail below, followed by a frequently asked question section.

Protective measures

- **Minimising contact**
 - Children will be in smaller groups or classes, forming a 'social bubble' of **no more than 15**.
 - Each bubble will **stay together** throughout their time in school and **not mix** with other groups.
 - As far as possible, each bubble will **work with the same adults** each day.
 - Each bubble will have **a classroom for its own exclusive use**. This classroom will be accessed by an **external door** and will have its own **designated toilet and hand washing facilities**.

- Each bubble will access the outside areas via its own external door, so **no children will move around the building internally.**
- Assemblies will be held within classrooms and lunch will be eaten either in the classroom or outside.
- Children will have more **space to spread out** in their classrooms and will have their own desk to work at but there is also a recognition that unlike older children and adults, early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff at all times.
- Each bubble will have a **staggered drop-off and pick-up time** and each family is requested to **only send one adult** to reduce the number of people on site.
- **Telephone appointments** are encouraged if parents need to speak to a member of staff.
- Families are requested as far as possible **not to use public transport or share lifts** to travel to school and to ensure **social distancing** when walking.
- **Hygiene**
 - Everyone on site will **clean their hands** thoroughly for 20 seconds with warm running water and soap on entry to the school, after being outside, before and after eating, after sneezing or coughing, before coming home and on every toilet visit.
 - Each bubble has access to its own **separate sink and toilet area**, 'Effective Hand Washing' posters are displayed in these.
 - **Hand sanitisers** and hand cream are also provided for each bubble.
 - Personal hygiene will continue to be taught to the children and they will be **shown how to wash hands effectively.**
 - We will promote good respiratory hygiene using the '**catch it, bin it, kill it**' approach and ensuring each bubble has a supply of tissues.
 - It is requested **uniform is washed** on a daily basis. (see updated uniform below).
 - We will not be sending home reading books and we request no items are brought into school apart from a lunchbox or water bottle.

- **Cleaning**

- Twice daily we will **thoroughly clean classrooms** and toilet areas.
- Frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned more often using **antibacterial** surface cleaner and wipes.
- Bins will be emptied **daily**.
- Rooms for each bubble will be kept **well-ventilated** with windows open where possible.
- Most soft furnishings have been removed from classrooms.

- **Infection control**

- Staff, pupils or visitors who have tested positive for COVID-19 are **not to enter** the school site until they have self-isolated for the recommended government period of 7 days and until a normal temperature can be maintained.
- Staff, pupils or visitors living in the same household as a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 are **not to enter** the school site until they have self-isolated for a period of 14 days.
- Staff, pupils, and visitors exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 (a new continuous cough, or fever, or a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)) are required to **stay away** from school until well and asymptomatic.
- Any person developing symptoms at school will be required to **return home**.

Frequently asked questions:

Will there be social distancing?

For each bubble there will be room within classrooms for children to have extra space to work, however, we know children, especially the youngest children, find it very difficult to keep at a 2 metre distance at all times. The government have recognised this in their guidance. The main control will be on limiting contact between bubbles at all times including at play and lunch.

Will my child be with their class teacher?

For the bubble measure to work effectively we have to keep group sizes to 15 or less and keep the same adults with them. This means that not all children in an eligible group will be able to be with their teacher. However, it is important that when children return they are with a member of staff they are familiar with. Therefore, Miss Magowan, Mr Healey and Miss Keegan will be supporting Reception. Miss Randle, Miss Bailey and Mrs Garner will be supporting Year 1. Mrs Bemrose, Miss Pearce, Miss Coulson and Miss Kasia will be supporting Year 6. Miss Shinner, Mrs Reed and Miss Wright will be supporting the children of critical workers in years 2,3,4 and 5. Children of critical workers in Year R, 1 and 6 will be with their own year group.

Will children be able to play?

Yes - all the groups will have time to play outside in their bubbles. They will not mix with other groups and each bubble will be given a designated area of the playground or field. Lunch can be eaten outside if the weather allows or in classrooms.

Do I have to send my child back?

This is entirely your decision and the Government will not penalise any family who do not intend to send their child back during the summer term.

Can I change my mind on sending my child in?

Yes – if you have a child in an eligible group and answered no about your decision to allow your child to return you can of course change your mind and let us know. We are taking the return slowly and inviting groups in over the space of a few weeks so please be patient as we expand safely.

Does my child have to wear school uniform?

Yes - your child needs to come in uniform and this will also apply to the children of critical workers. *We are changing our expectations for uniform for the remainder of the summer term.*

- Plain white collared shirt or blouse OR St Gabriel's crested white polo shirt OR plain white polo shirt
- Dark grey shorts, trousers, skirt or pinafore dress, OR Dark red/burgundy and white checked Summer dress
- Dark grey or black socks or tights
- Black shoes (not trainers)

All of these items can be purchased relatively inexpensively.

We are asking that uniform is washed each day (not shoes).

Your child **does not need to wear St Gabriel's jumper or cardigan or tie**. On cooler days, you may wish to wear the St Gabriel's crested grey sweatshirt which is more easily washed.

When will Year 2,3,4 and 5 pupils return to school?

At present there are no confirmed dates for pupils of these year groups to return to school.

Will home learning be set for Years 2,3,4 and 5?

Yes – children will be directed to home learning opportunities and you will receive a phone call to check in each week. Please keep sharing the fantastic work you are doing at home. Try to [keep a routine going](#) in line with your family circumstances and we will try to support as best we can.

Will home learning be provided for Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 pupils who are not attending?

Yes – we will guide you to opportunities to learn at home and you will receive a phone call each week to check how you are doing. Please keep sharing the fantastic work you are doing at home and stay connected. Try to [keep a routine going](#) in line with your family circumstances and we will try to support as best we can.

Where can I access support for online safety for my child?

You may find these websites useful to support online safety:

- [Childline](#) - for support
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - to report and remove harmful online content
- [CEOP](#) - for advice on making a report about online abuse

Will the children and teachers be required to wear PPE, mask, gloves and gowns?

No - Government advice is that PPE should only be worn when carrying out intimate care (First Aid or helping a child change following toileting) or if a member of staff has to look after children who develop a temperature or persistent cough during the day and is waiting to be collected. Children should not be wearing masks due to their age.

What will the procedure be in the morning when dropping my child off?

We would ask parents to adhere to the social distancing guidelines throughout and please be prompt. You will have a staggered start time. You are encouraged to walk if possible or drive if necessary. Please only one adult per family and if possible other siblings to be left with appropriate care at home. On entering the main school gates please walk round to your child's clearly marked drop off point. We are employing a **one-way system**. After dropping your child please continue to follow the signs which will lead you out of the school site via the gate at the far end of the field. Please continue to follow the one-way system back to your car if required. Please park considerately to maintain a smooth flow of traffic. Please do not try to walk against the one-way system. We appreciate this will add a few minutes on to your routine but will reduce pinch points on site. There will be signs directing you and a member of staff at each entrance to assist you. I know it feels incongruous with our ethos but please do not congregate or stop to talk outside drop off areas or near the gates.

If I forget something can I bring it later?

No – please avoid returning to drop items into the office, telephone us if required.

If my child hurts themselves will there be First Aid?

Yes - your child will be comforted and treated. You will receive a text, email or phone call if necessary.

Where will my child be taught?

Your child will be taught either in their own classroom or in the classroom adjacent to theirs.

What will my child be learning?

In school, we want to ensure returning children feel happy and safe and their emotional well-being will be at the forefront of our planning. We will give time to socialise and talk as we will be establishing a new routine to give a sense of comfort. We will spend some time on key aspects of learning in English and Maths and look at preparations for the next academic year. We will be utilising our outdoor environment as much as possible. If you are learning at home, following the [Oak National Academy timetable](#) or [BBC Bitesize daily](#) will give you a good grounding in key aspects of learning for your year group. Please do not worry that your child is falling behind! We are all taking this at our own pace and learning for everyone will be different than under 'normal' circumstances.

Will meals be provided by the school kitchen?

Yes - the school kitchen will be providing hot or cold 'deli-bags' directly to each group. Our supplier, Educaterers, have designed a new menu which includes hot and cold sandwiches, wraps, and rolls. Lunches will be eaten in the classroom or outside. If your child wishes to bring their own lunch, then this of course is fine.

What will my child need to bring?

A water bottle, a break-time snack (packed lunch if required), sun cream and a sun hat for sunny weather. We will not be using cloakrooms, so any coats will be stored in the classroom. Please can you return any school reading books as these will be cleaned and stored.

What will the procedure be in the afternoon when picking my child up?

As the morning, again please be prompt for your staggered pick up time. Follow the one-way system to your designated pick up point. If you are waiting, please maintain your distance from others by using the markings at each point. After collecting your child please exit via the gate at the far end of the field.

Can I drop off and pick up siblings at the same time?

Yes – siblings can be dropped off and picked up at the same time. Please drop off siblings at the later of their staggered start times and pick up at the earlier of their staggered finish times.

Will my child return full time?

Yes – as children return they will be offered full time places. Start and finish times will be staggered so will vary slightly from our usual start and finish times.

How can I pass messages to the members of staff working with my child?

If you need to speak to a member of staff, please phone or email the school office. If there have been any changes to your circumstances, which staff need to be aware of before your child returns to school, please let us know.

When will I find out if I have a place?

Parents who have requested a place for their child will be contacted by phone or email on Friday 29th May to let them know when a place will be available for their child. Once again, we really appreciate your patience and support in facilitating a gradual expansion of numbers.

I am a critical worker. Will my child be guaranteed a place?

Due to high numbers of requests for places for children of critical workers, we have been required to prioritise places in the first instance. We will work with you to support a return to school in line with our gradual, phased approach to reopening.

I appreciate that is a **huge** amount of information and you may still have unanswered questions. Please do not hesitate to get in touch over the next few days by email or phone with outstanding queries. The measures in place are not intended to inconvenience you but to keep everyone safe. Further Government information for parents is available [here](#) and [here](#).

Although there are many details and specifics, the overarching aims remain:

- We are aiming to gradually and in the safest possible way increase the number of pupils in school. This will take place over a number of weeks.
- We have a number of measures in place to reduce or mitigate risk to members of our community.
- We want the experience for all our children in or out of school to be positive and engaging.
- We will support children in or out of school as best we can and remain connected throughout this period.

Throughout the next half term, we will all no doubt continue to be tested by the circumstances we find ourselves in, but I am confident our school values of Love, Community, Respect, Growth and Integrity will continue to shine through in our school family. Thank you for your amazing support. Once more I look forward to journeying the next stage together.

Yours sincerely,



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