



27<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Dear parents and carers,

I hope you have all greatly enjoyed your time together this summer. As we near the greatly-anticipated return to full-time schooling for all pupils, I wanted to let you know how much we are looking forward to seeing all of you and to reiterate our approach for encouraging a safe return for everyone.

### **Full return**

Government published [guidance](#) sets out a rationale and explains measures for ensuring a full return to school for all pupils in September. In it they state:

*'Given the improved position, the balance of risk is now overwhelmingly in favour of children returning to school. For the vast majority of children, the benefits of being back in school far outweigh the very low risk from coronavirus, we can plan for all children to return and start to reverse the costs of missed education. This will be an important move back towards normal life for many children and families.'*

There is also a helpful ['What Parents Need to Know'](#) page with more information.

We know how difficult it has been for pupils who have missed out on months of being in school but also appreciate there will be a lingering anxiety for some. We are very much looking forward to welcoming all of our children back in September and want to reassure families that there will be a number of measures in place to minimise any risks posed by coronavirus whilst providing as full an educational experience as possible. We developed good working practices during the period of lockdown (where we accommodated up to 100 children in school) and are confident we can make the transition to having all pupils in school safely, giving them their full entitlement to education. Government 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.

- ❖ The most important step is to ensure anyone who is presenting with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or who has someone in their household who does, **does not attend school and gets tested**. We will engage with NHS Test and Trace process where necessary and we will manage any confirmed cases amongst the school community following guidance from public health.
- ❖ In school, everyone on site will clean their hands thoroughly and often; we will ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach to coughs and sneezes and we will ensure the school surfaces and equipment are regularly disinfected.
- ❖ We will minimise opportunities for pupils to mix outside of their classes by holding virtual assemblies and separating break and lunch times. We won't hold whole school events for now and our extra-curricular activities will also be limited. However, we will aim to deliver our full curriculum to all children and make their experience as close to 'normal' as can be.

### **Frequently asked questions:**

#### **Will there be social distancing?**

Some - within classes, particularly for our younger children, there will not be an expectation to maintain social distancing. We **will** aim to limit contact between classes throughout the school day. We would ask parents to be especially mindful of keeping their distance from each other at drop-off and pick-up times.

#### **Will my child be with their class teacher?**

Yes - classes will have their own class teacher and teaching assistants. To enable a full delivery of our curriculum, at times other staff will work with the classes.

#### **Will children be able to play?**

Yes - all the groups will have time to play outside in their classes. They will not mix with other classes.

#### **Do I have to send my child back to school?**

Yes – it is the Government expectation that all children will be able to access full-time education in school from September.

### **Does my child have to wear school uniform?**

Yes – We believe that the wearing of a school uniform enables children to identify with and take pride in their school, strengthens community, gives a sense of belonging, is practical and smart, reinforces a positive work ethos and reduces expenditure for parents/carers.

Winter Uniform (from September):

- St Gabriel's jumper or cardigan
- St Gabriel's tie
- Plain white collared shirt or blouse\*
- Dark grey trousers, shorts, skirt or pinafore dress \*
- Dark grey or black socks or tights\*
- Black shoes (not trainers)

\*All of these items can be purchased relatively inexpensively from a range of retailers.

There is no longer an expectation that uniform is washed each day.

### **Will home learning still be set?**

Yes – our homework approach has always centred on providing learning platforms for children at home. Spelling Shed, Maths Shed, Read Theory (from Key Stage 2) and Times Table Rockstars (from Year 2) will continue to be available for children to practise key skills. We will also be able to support home reading by sending home books as the autumn term progresses. The Oak National Academy and BBC Bitesize will be available all year to all children and will help support pupils further. This will be especially important if your child is at home for any reason.

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

No - Government advice for primary schools 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 in our school should not be wearing masks due to their age.

### **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.

### **What will my child be learning?**

Lots - 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 spend morning lessons focusing on English and Maths, making progress and catching up where necessary. Afternoon lessons will offer the full range of foundation subjects.

### **Will meals be provided by the school kitchen?**

Yes - the school kitchen will be providing hot meal options for all children who would like one. New menus will be sent out before the start of term and available to view on ParentPay. Lunches will be eaten in the school hall with children sitting in class groups. If your child wishes to bring their own lunch, then this of course is fine.

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

As far as possible, 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 in this way. We are aiming to minimise face-to-face meetings where possible but they can be arranged where required.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch by email or phone with outstanding queries. The measures in place are not intended to inconvenience you or your child but to keep everyone safe whilst giving pupils access to a full education entitlement.

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

- Welcoming every one of our pupils in September and giving them a full curriculum offer, making as much progress as possible.
- We have a number of measures in place to reduce or mitigate risk to members of our community which we hope will inspire confidence.
- We want the experience for all our children in school to be positive and engaging.

Yours sincerely,



Mr. A. Taylor  
Headteacher



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