

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

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Monday 20th July 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are looking forward to meeting you and your children at the beginning of the autumn term. It is a huge shame that the Covid-19 outbreak has prevented us from meeting you and the children this term, but as you will be aware, we are not allowed to hold any large group meetings in school.

We are pleased to be writing to you about our plans for the full opening of school from September 2020.

We have learned a lot from the partial reopening during the summer term and have been able to adjust our risk assessment to welcome all children back in full classes on September 3rd 2020.

The government has made it clear that there is a legal requirement for all children to return to school at the start of the Autumn Term in September.

Of course, there will be plenty that needs to be caught up on academically. Re-establishing rules and routines and focusing on the emotional and mental wellbeing of the children will be integral to their successful reintegration into school life. Many children came back to school in June and they quickly understood some of the new safety rules and established a new 'normal'. Thank you to all those parents who helped to make this possible

Protective measures we are taking in light of coronavirus (COVID-19)

First and foremost, it goes without saying that the safety of your child and of our staff is our top priority. We will be following the latest government guidance, to further develop our new ways of operating. This will allow us to open as safely as possible, focusing on measures that will help limit the risk of coronavirus transmitting within our setting.

Some of the steps we are taking in readiness for reopening include:

- Asking that anyone who is displaying coronavirus symptoms, or who lives with someone who does, not to attend school. That includes children and staff who work here.
- Keeping our children in class groups with as much consistent staffing as possible, and minimising contact with other groups around the setting.
- Cleaning our hands more often than usual. We have developed routines to ensure children understand when and how to wash their hands, making sure they wash them thoroughly for at least 20 seconds using running water and soap and dry them thoroughly, or use alcohol hand rub or sanitiser ensuring that all parts of the hands are covered.
- Ensuring our children understand good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach and ensuring a good supply of tissues and bins throughout the setting.
- Implementing an enhanced cleaning schedule, ensuring surfaces touched by children and staff are cleaned regularly and throughout the day, including table tops, door handles and play equipment.
- Asking parents and carers to physically distance from each other and from staff when dropping off and collecting their children and to limit drop off and collection to one parent or carer per household.
- Asking children not to bring toys or other items from home to school, unless this is essential to their health and wellbeing.

What can parents and carers do to help?

There are a number of things parents and carers can do to help us make these arrangements effective, in addition to the points listed above concerning arrival and departure and not bringing toys to the setting.

- If your child, or someone in your household has coronavirus symptoms, they should not come to school and the school office should be informed immediately.
- **If your child develops coronavirus symptoms while at the school**, you will need to immediately collect your child, get them tested for coronavirus and inform us of the outcome of the test as soon as you have it. **Children can not return to school until they have been tested for coronavirus and parents have informed us of the outcome of the test.**
- For the vast majority of children and young people, coronavirus is a mild illness. Some categories of children with specific serious health conditions should not attend school. If you are unsure whether your child should attend school due to a health condition that they or someone they live with has, please contact us so we can discuss the details with you.
- Make sure you have a laptop, tablet, etc. and internet, so children can learn online at home. Please contact us if you are finding this difficult.

Testing

We ask all parents and carers to ensure they organise a test for their child, in the event that they develop coronavirus symptoms, and notify us immediately of a positive test. A positive test will ensure rapid action to protect other children and staff in the school. A negative test means that parents or carers do not need to self-isolate any longer than is necessary and their children can return to school. **Children can not return to school until they have been tested for coronavirus and parents have informed us of the outcome of the test.**

Return dates

As you know, class year groups will be staggered so that we can gradually and safely familiarise everyone into our new ways of working.

Year 1 to Year 6 should return to school on Thursday 3rd September 2020

As usual, Reception and Nursery have different start dates. Reception and Nursery parents know what these dates are.

School times

To support social distancing, we have also staggered the times of the school day for the different year groups.

	Start	End	Drop off and collection arrangements
Year 5 and Year 6	9.00am	3.20pm	These children enter through the side entrance and go to their classrooms. Parents collect these children from the side entrance at the end of their day.
Year 3 and Year 4	9.00am	3.20pm	These children enter through the front entrance and go to their classroom. Parents collect these children from the front entrance at the end of their day.
Year 1 and Year 2	9.10am	3.30pm	These children enter through the side entrance and go to their classrooms. Parents collect these children from the side entrance at the end of their day.

Nursery and Reception	9.10am	3.30pm	These children enter through the front entrance and go to their classroom. Parents collect these children from the front entrance at the end of their day.
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***If you have children in different year groups, please bring all your children to school at whichever time is earlier.**

If you arrive early to drop off or collect your child, please take a walk around the local area to keep Macklin Street as empty as possible and avoid congestion. Thank you for your support in ensuring 2 metres social distancing.

Drop off and collection arrangements

Morning “drop off” and end of day collection, at allocated time in order to aid social distancing (see above)

- Please bring your child to the side or front entrance as detailed above.
- In the morning and afternoon, Mrs O’Reilly, Ms Logue and the teachers will be outside at the side and front entrance to collect and dismiss the children.
- Thank you for your co-operation in supporting social distancing at all times.
- Only one adult per family will be able to drop off and/or collect your child.
- Please do not arrive any earlier or later than your allocated time.
- Any messages for the teacher should be sent via email to the school office or please telephone and your message will be passed on.
- The main school office will be closed to visitors, but is contactable by phone/email.
- **Parents can not enter the school building.**

Class organisation – all classes

- Children will be taught in whole class groups.
- We will aim for each class group not to integrate with another class group throughout the school day.

Playtimes / lunchtimes

- The children will have staggered active playtimes during the day where they only mix with their class group.
- All children will eat a packed lunch in their allocated classroom.
- If parents prefer, children can bring in a packed lunch from home.

Curriculum / Learning

- The full school curriculum will be taught as much as possible.
- Priorities for learning will include personal, social, emotional and physical wellbeing and revisiting essential learning in reading, writing, maths, speaking and listening.
- Outdoor learning will be encouraged where possible and classrooms will be naturally ventilated at all times.
- Reading books can be sent home from September.

Learning from home

- If a class group of children has to self-isolate at home for 14 days, learning online from home will start immediately. We will be using Google Classroom to facilitate this. (More information to follow). This will involve daily online contact with a teacher.
- The learning online from home curriculum will reflect as much as possible what the children would have been learning at school.

Keeping safe through good hygiene

- Good hygiene practice will continue to be in place: cleaning hands more often than usual; washing hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with running water and soap; promoting the ‘catch it, bin it, kill it’ approach and frequent cleaning of touched surfaces and resources.
- Each group will be allocated specific toilets to use to minimise contact as much as possible.
- Daily cleaning will take place *throughout* the school day, with a particularly thorough clean of classrooms, corridors, staircases and toilets overnight.
- Equipment that cannot be easily cleaned will be removed/placed out of bounds.

- All children should wear school uniform. We hope that this will help them to feel that things are starting to return to 'normal'.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- The Government has said that PPE is not be necessary in schools, other than for a very small number of cases (e.g. routine intimate care needs and when supervising a child who becomes unwell with symptoms of coronavirus).

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Do all children have to return to school at the start of the Autumn Term?

The government has stated that all children must, by law return to school at the start of the summer term (unless they have been advised by a doctor to stay at home).

2. If a member of my family is considered to be clinically extremely vulnerable, do I still have to send my child to school?

The government says that all children must return to school at the start of the Autumn Term.

3. What will happen if I choose not to send my child to school?

The Government has stated that parents will be fined if their children do not attend school.

4. Will there be any after school clubs from September?

Our understanding at the moment is that after school provision at St Joseph's by 'Fit for Sport' will run from September, as usual to support working parents. This runs from 3.30pm until 6.00pm. Please contact the school office if you would like further information about this provision. School will not be running after school clubs until further notice in order to minimise the mixing of class groups across the school.

5. Will there be any events in the Autumn Term, e.g. the Nativity or the music concert, class assemblies, coffee mornings etc.?

We are trying to find a way to run some special events virtually, using Zoom. We will keep you informed about these.

6. Can I just pop in to the school office if I have a question or if I want to give school staff a message?

Parents cannot come in to the school building until further notice, unless they have been invited in by the head of school, SENCO or class teacher. Please communicate with us by telephone or e-mail the school office to let us know that you would like us to call you.

If you need to meet with the Head of School, SENCO or class teacher please telephone the school office to schedule an appointment.

You will as usual, be able to talk to class teachers at the end of the day at the school entrance.

7. Can my child bring in anything from home to school?

Yes, children can bring in their own packed lunch if they do not want a school packed lunch and their book bag to carry their school reading books. Please leave all other bags, toys, books, etc. at home, including pens, pencils etc. These will be provided by the school.

8. If I have a child in two different year groups, which drop off and pick up time should I use?

Please use the earliest drop off and pick up time.

9. What will happen if there is a confirmed case of coronavirus of a child or adult at school?

If a child or staff member develops symptoms compatible with coronavirus, they will be sent

home, asked to get a test and report back the result of the test to the school as soon as possible.

They must also self-isolate for 7 days

Where the child or staff member tests negative, they can return to school

Where the child or staff member tests positive, the rest of the class will be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days. Children will take part in learning online from home during this period.

Thank you again for your support through these unexpected and uncertain times.

We look forward to welcoming you back in September 😊

With warmest wishes to you and your loved ones.

Mrs O'Reilly
Mrs Jackson
Ms Docherty

Head of School
Executive Headteacher
Chair of Governors
