



Respect, Courage, Compassion, Friendship, Trust, Perseverance

Head Teacher:
Mrs C. McManus

15 May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

As you will be well aware, on Sunday evening the government directed schools to plan for the broader reopening of schools:

Phase 1: Reception, Year 1, and Year 6 to **possibly** return to school on 1 June.

They set out an order of preference, starting with the youngest children: Reception, Year 1, and then Year 6. However, children of essential workers and vulnerable children remain the priority group. No other year group, other than those of children whose parents are classed as Key Workers or identified as vulnerable, can come into school.

I write to you to keep you informed of the delay in outlining our plans, and to thank you for your patience and continuing support. I fully understand and appreciate how challenging this situation is for all our families but have to ask you to please bear with us.

In response to the Prime Minister's Sunday evening announcement, we worked hard on devising a safe and structured plan, working within the guidelines instructed by the Department for Education. We are also working closely with our local schools and Sefton LA to consider some of the common barriers, concerns, and issues.

The safety of our children, staff, and families is paramount. Each school is different. We need to consider the school layout, classroom sizes, as well as the number of children of key workers and vulnerable children at St. John's School. Parents will also appreciate that, as in other schools, some of our staff are 'shielding', others are vulnerable, and there are those who live with family members who are vulnerable and/or shielding.

The government guidance states that children are 'strongly encouraged' to attend. However, the DfE has been clear that parents will not be fined, and schools will not be held to account for attendance during this period. We, therefore, appreciate that returning children to school is not mandatory. I want to reassure you that we're not going to be pressuring anyone to send their children to school. We'll keep you updated with all our preparations for making sure the school is as safe as possible so that you can make an informed decision.

Today, I was in a position to share our proposed plan for the phased reopening of our school, which set out our comprehensive measures to minimize risk. This used a rota system, an approach adopted by the majority of schools to manage additional children in our school safely. However, last night the DfE issued new guidance, which means that schools will have to revisit and reconsider our situation.

What happens next?

Schools can only expand the number of pupils attending if it is safe to do so based on individual circumstances and specific issues.

Below are some of our planned measures for a phased return to school. The finer details will be shared once the finalised plan is in place. However, I share the following to keep all parents informed of the general principles and measures.

Although we cannot eliminate the risk completely, we hope that the following planned measures will reassure parents:

1. Group sizes - The government has stated that classes should be halved. There will be no more than 15 children allowed in each group base.
2. No children or adults with symptoms or from a household with symptoms will be permitted to attend the site. Any school group with a confirmed case will be required to self-isolate for 14 days;
3. Staggered start and finish times to ensure we can adhere to social distancing when children are brought to school and collected at the end of the day.
4. Groups - groups will NOT mix; therefore there will be staggered break times and lunchtimes.
5. Staff - class groups will be led by an allocated teacher and/or teaching assistant. Every effort will be made to ensure that the staff team is consistent for each class group. Children may not have their usual teacher or teaching assistant.
6. Teaching Assistant support - children will get the support they need but may need to be encouraged to work with more independence than usual.
7. Use of stationery - School will provide pens, pencils etc. as usual but children will not be able to share equipment. Parents may wish to provide their child with their own pencil case, pencils, pens, eraser, ruler, colouring pencils for their sole use in school.
8. Systems for toileting will be in place
9. Hand washing - regular hand washing rotas will be in place for teaching groups. The children will wash their hands when coming into school, before eating, after toileting, before leaving school and regularly during the school day.
10. Break times - Children will still need to abide by social distancing measures at breaktimes. These times will be staggered according to each group and will mainly consist of exercise around the daily mile track, rather than play.
11. Lunchtimes - a packed lunch will either be provided by the school or by parents if preferred. Lunches will be delivered to classrooms and eaten at desks rather than in the hall. There will be time for exercise, and these times will be staggered according to each group and will need to comply with social distancing. The welfare staff will supervise the same group each day.
12. Cleaning: In addition to thorough cleaning from our cleaning team, high touchpoints such as light switches will be cleaned more frequently than usual, and doors will be wedged open, limiting the amount of 'high touch' surfaces.
13. Office - parents should email where possible or telephone when an email is not an option. We will be limiting visitors to the school to an absolute minimum and ask that parents only come to the foyer if it is absolutely necessary. Only one person at a time will be allowed in the foyer. If you are waiting, it is safer to wait outside and at a distance of 2m from others.

PHASE 1

We need to ask parents, who are within the two groups outlined below, about the potential demand for places. Based on the general principles and measures set out above, would you wish to take a place for your child/ren:

1. The government has indicated that vulnerable pupils and the children of key workers remain the priority even after 1 June. The essential worker list remains the same.
2. We would also ask parents of children in Reception, Year 1, and Year 6 to confirm whether your child would be attending if a place was available.

Please complete and return the slip on the letter - by email or if you do not have the facility to do this by emailing admin.stjohnswaterloo@schools.sefton.gov.uk or calling school to inform us if your child would be attending. **Please inform the school as soon as possible or by Monday 18 May at the latest.**

Yours sincerely
Mrs C McManus

Please inform school as soon as possible or by **Monday 18 May** at the latest to enable us to plan.

Essential worker

I am requesting a place for my child/children to attend school.

The name(s) and classes of your child(ren) who attend St. John's C.E. Primary School:

Name: _____ Class: _____
Name: _____ Class: _____
Name: _____ Class: _____
Name: _____ Class: _____

The job and title of each employer for each adult within the household (proof will be required):

Adult 1:

Occupation _____ Employer _____

Adult 2:

Occupation _____ Employer _____

Children in Years Reception, Year 1 Year and/or 6

I am requesting a place for my child/children to attend school, if a place becomes available:

Name: _____ Class: _____
Name: _____ Class: _____
Name: _____ Class: _____
Name: _____ Class: _____

