

Return to School Policy – September 2020- Managing the Covid Pandemic

*This policy should be read and applied in conjunction with the School’s Covid 19 Risk Assessment and current government guidance including Keeping Children safe in Education (September 2020)*

During these unprecedented times St Joseph’s School and Nursery remains committed to our families and our community.

**The main aims of this policy are to:**

* Keep children, parents/carers and staff safe- by minimising the risk of contracting Covid 19.
* Allow all children to return to continuous education within their peer group
* Deliver lessons that will support learning across the curriculum.
* Support children and families who may be worried or anxious at this time.
* To follow the law

St Joseph’s School and Nursery is following government guidance to ensure the school environment, teaching staff, children and parents/ carers at St Joseph’s are well prepared for a full return to school in September. We will adhere to the principles below when welcoming all year groups back and work systematically and cautiously to support all our cohorts of children.

Having learned from the phased return of certain Year Groups in June, we are guided by the following key principles:

* + Creating ‘bubbles’ for the children to work and play in.
  + Practising Social Distancing (SD) throughout the school.
  + Ensuring hygiene practices are thorough
  + Cleaning and deep cleaning the whole environment to include outdoor equipment
  + Teaching and Learning
  + Well-being – to include Personal Health and Safety Bubbles

The children will work in normal class groups and have a teacher/teaching assistant who will work with them throughout the day as normal. This may or may not be their class teacher.

The class groups are called ‘bubbles’. Establishing bubbles will minimise contact with a wider number of children and adults. Each ‘bubble‘ is to work in a designated space/classroom which will be well ventilated and play in a zoned area of the playground.

Each ‘bubble‘ will have designated toilets and hand washing facilities. Lunch will be eaten in a designated space. The kitchen staff will make regular lunches or a packed lunch from home may be required. All children will bring in their own water bottle which needs to be labelled.

**Social Distancing**

* In order to help children practise this we have arranged the classroom spaces so that tables and pupils are, in so far as is possible, 1 - 2 metres apart and facing forward.
* Teachers will where possible, maintain a 1-2m Social Distance when teaching and supporting children as recommended by government advice
* Children will have their own equipment at their table to minimise movement around the room.
* We have also arranged staggered playtimes on separate playgrounds, start times and lunch times to ensure it is possible to practise Social Distancing throughout the school.
* There will also be a one way system in operation with children and staff clearly guided by signs and symbols.
* Some corridors will require a ‘Give Way’ system to operate
* Parents/carers will be given a designated ‘drop off ‘ point and ‘pick up’ point via the main Reception or through the gym if needed.
* Only one parent may be permitted to bring their child to school.
* No parents will be allowed to enter school but younger children will be met by a member of staff at the door before being taken to their room(s).
* There will be markings in and around school so that children and adults will be able to practise Social Distancing wherever possible. Staff will also issue regular reminders particularly at playtimes and during movement around school
* The school reception area is closed except for payments and communication between home and school will be by telephone, e-mail or tex
* Markings on the floor of the Reception area will help promote social distancing whilst a Perspex screen will protect the Reception staff.
* Social Distancing will operate in the IT suite and Dining Hall
* There will be no big group events like school assemblies
* Breakfast Club, Holiday Club and After School Club will not operate to protect the identity of the individual ‘bubbles’

**Hygiene**

It is imperative that the children and adults at school practise thorough handwashing. This will be incorporated into their daily routine:

* + On arrival to school
  + Before and after breaks and sport activities
  + After using outdoor equipment such as bikes or climbing equipment
  + Before cooking and eating
  + After sneezing and coughing
  + After using the toilet
  + Before leaving school

The school will ensure that there are adequate supplies of soap, hand sanitisers in central areas and that all classroom spaces have bins for tissues. Parents/carers can support with this by ensuring hands are washed before and after school. Medicated wipes should also be provided for the children’s own personal use.

**Cleaning and Deep Cleaning**

The children will have their own supply of essential equipment which will be stored in their trays or plastic wallets. Equipment will not be shared. They will sit at the same table each day and work with resources that have been allocated to them or their “ bubble “.

Throughout the day surfaces will be cleaned. Each area has a supply of disinfectant spray and disposable paper towels. The cleaning team will thoroughly clean each space daily which will include cleaning light switches and door handles. At the end of each week all equipment, furniture and resources will have a deep clean ready for the following week.

Classroom spaces have been cleared of soft furnishings, resources that are impossible to clean (such as play dough or toys with intricate parts) and unnecessary furniture. Shared materials and surfaces are cleaned and sanitised more frequently. Resources for activities such as painting, sticking , cutting , small world play, indoor and outdoor construction are washed before and after use.

**Teaching and Learning**

Teachers will plan and deliver a range of lessons based on the relevant year group curriculum. There will be undoubtedly less freedom for teachers to deliver the curriculum in the way they are used to. However, every effort will be made to ensure the children are stimulated and working on tasks that enhance their learning. Teachers will use the same plans that the children at home are using to ensure consistency and fairness. Teachers and teaching assistants will use the outdoors as much as possible to deliver lessons, and will be allocated a dedicated space to use as an outdoor classroom.

For those children unable to attend school for whatever reason, the staff will endeavour to provide learning guidance in the form of work sheets and booklets or email support. Some support may also be available via class Dojo, but as the majority of the teacher’s time will be in the classroom, this will be limited.

**Well-being**

All staff have been briefed to enable them to support all children who may be anxious or distressed about coming back to school.

It is essential that school and home remain in communication if a child is manifesting signs of distress. The key contact will be the class teacher or teaching assistant who will be supported by Darren Purdy (SENDCo) and the Headteacher

Individual needs will be managed in the usual way. For example, IPM or PSP (Individual Provision Map or Pupil Support Plan)

Staff wellbeing will be provided for as detailed in the schools Covid Risk Assessment to include:

* Opportunities for staggered start and finish times in so far as is practicable
* Opportunities to work from home during PPA (for example) wherever possible
* Regular comfort breaks
* Support within the classroom where staffing levels allow
* Notwithstanding the need to fulfil their contractual and professional obligations, support and leniency will be offered to those members of staff who are unwell, vulnerable or shielding. This may require the provision of sick notes, exemption certificates and the like from appropriately qualified professional bodies.

School will look and feel very different and we will be supporting children to adapt to this new normal by setting out clear expectations for behaviour, rewarding positive behaviours and supporting children when they are finding things tricky.

Class teachers and children will devise their own bubble charters/ rules which will keep everyone safe and happy. These will be set out clearly and visibly for the children and be age appropriate.

Where a child is finding following the rules difficult parents will be informed so that they are able to support at home. Our approach will be fair, kind and with a clear purpose as everyone has a right to be safe and happy in their environment.

**Signs and Symptoms of the virus**

If anyone becomes unwell with a new continuous cough or a high temperature they will be isolated in one of our designated isolation rooms which are the First Aid room, The Breakout Room or an unused Nursery Room.

We will be making immediate contact with parents/carers who will need to pick up their child as soon as possible. They will then be sent home to follow the COVID\_19 guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection guidance.

All parents will be contacted immediately if there is an outbreak of the infection.

If two or more children test positive within a year group. All the children in that ‘bubble’ may be sent home to isolate. In extreme cases, all the children may be sent home in either school, nursery or both.

Regular postings on Class Dojo, email and text will keep parents up-dated with any changes regarding to the current situation. Please contact the Head teacher, Reception Staff, the Nursery Manager or Business Manager if you have any concerns or worries and to ensure your contact details are up to date.

We will strive to stay alert, control the virus and save lives

A E Crawshaw

Head Teacher July 2020

Parents and Carers should also be aware that from September education is compulsory for all school aged children and that fines may be imposed on those who refuse to send their children with good reason. These reasons are yet to be clarified by government and the DfE.