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17th of June 2020

Dear parent/guardian,

I hope you are well and staying safe. Firstly may I apologise for the length of this letter. There is an awful lot of information to tell you at this point.

As you are aware, following the Education Minister for Wales' announcement, schools will be re-opening on Monday June 29th until Friday July 24th for "Check in, Catch Up, Prepare for summer and September" sessions. This means we will be open for an extra week. We stress that this is a partial reopening and the pupils will have an opportunity to return to school for a 3 hour period, equivalent to a 'school day morning' between 9a.m and 1p.m.

The purpose of the next four weeks from the 29th is to:

- Come to school (pupils to engage with staff and staff to check pupils' welfare, access to devices and moving forward with learning)
- Catch-up (welfare and core skills support, dovetailing online and personalized learning)
- Prepare for summer and September (getting teachers and children ready for the 'new normal' in the Autumn term)

The guidelines regarding social distancing have not changed and, as a result of a risk assessment (adherence to the 2m social distance rule), the capacity of the school will be reduced to 52 pupils on the premises each day (40 school and 12 Emergency Childcare). This number is based on the 2m rule and securing a space for children and staff to move around the classroom and school safely. In order to reduce the risk of transmitting the virus, children will be placed in groups of a maximum of 8 per room and stay within this class 'bubble'. The members of the 'bubble' will not change. They will stay together during breaks and will not mix with other 'bubbles'.

Having discussed and thought of many possible scenarios, we are confident that our solution works best for St Mary's School. I would emphasise that our decision is based on the welfare, safety, happiness and well-being of our pupils being at the forefront of our mind.

When will my child be at school?

The school will open on the 29th of June. The school will be open in the mornings only for the first fortnight for statutory provision only. This does not include Nursery provision. A quarter of the pupils will be invited on Monday, a quarter on Tuesday, a quarter on Wednesday and the final quarter on Thursday. The school will not be open to pupils on Friday as the government has suggested that one day be used to deep clean the school weekly. The afternoon sessions and Friday will be used by teachers to continue the distance learning that has sustained the education of pupils recently. Educating the pupils will continue through current means, by Seesaw and Google Classroom. Please bear in mind; teaching pupils is not the priority at the school during this time. Instead, it is for their welfare and will be centred around activities with this in mind. Before the 13th of July, the school will review the situation and inform you in good time of any changes.

What will be different at school?

Though the staff will, of course, be the same and will be ecstatic to see the children once again, things will be different and strange for the pupils in the beginning. Unfortunately, this is inevitable as we adhere to the government's guidelines, though in an as sympathetic and sensitive manner as possible. Social distancing will be a significant part of this. As only a fraction of the class will be in on any given day, the pupils will be spread out. Of course, they can interact, chat and acquaint themselves with each other but will do so, as is the new norm, at a safe distance. PPE (personal protection equipment) may be in evidence at the school. The PPE will mainly be the clear face guards that you see in some shops. They might not be used throughout the day, and some

teachers might decide not to use them, but they will be in use. We do not want to scare any child. This is a time of engaging and re-forming bonds, and we do not wish to hamper this.

The lessons will be centred around the pupils' well-being and welfare, with activities that rebuild that community feeling we held so dear before the pandemic. It will be a time to mend walls and reassure pupils.

Break times will continue but will be staggered so that there is more space for the children to play. The local authority has decided that school dinners will not be served during this time. This, of course, is not an issue as the school will be open in the mornings only.

Who will be in the same session as my child?

As far as how we will split the pupils, this will be incredibly difficult and challenging. Once you have filled in the form below and decided whether you want your child to attend, we will try and match them with their friends as best as we can. They will then be allocated a day to attend, and this will be their day until the end of the term. We will try and do this as quickly as possible so that you can make arrangements. Unfortunately, we will not be able to swap days once they have been allocated. If we were to do this, it would have repercussions on all other days and pupils.

Key Worker Day Care Provision.

If you are a key-worker the childcare facility will be based in two of our spare classrooms. It is important to note that children in the Care Hub will be separate from the children who will be coming back to an engagement session. It will not be possible for your child to be in the Care Hub and the engagement session on the same day, so you must choose one or the other once you know which day your child's 'bubble' will be in class. The care will still run from Monday to Friday from 8 am-5 pm. Bookings need to be made through the school by phoning 01407 763176. If you are a key-worker, sending your child in all week does not allocate a 'the Catch up, Check-In and Prepare' slot every day.

Should the number of key-worker pupils increase significantly, it could have an impact on the school capacity might become insufficient and other classrooms might have to be used. To book your child/ren into Coronavirus Child Care for the week starting 29.06.20 please follow the link below:

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=Ug4_TzS3ZEGUCRtgHRR5kxsT5qQhJzIGtCYacilZ0shUMDVGMzc5V0cwV1hWMTNOQlpUMkxERVowMi4u

Hopefully, we have given you as clear a picture as possible of what will happen at St Mary's during the last four weeks of term. The teachers are looking forward to getting back to some form of normality. However, it will be a gradual process of rebuilding - which is what we are trying to accomplish here.

Could you please fill in the form below stating your intentions for the last four weeks of term. Should you decide at a later date that you wish to attend the school, having declined the offer initially, this will not be a problem. However, you must contact the office to arrange this.

Hopefully, our plan for reopening will allow the pupils to check-in, will enable them to catch up with their friends and prepare them for what September might bring. The link to let us know your intention is here, please complete the questionnaire by Monday the 22nd of June at the latest.

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=Ug4_TzS3ZEGUCRtgHRR5kxsT5qQhJzIGtCYacilZ0shUN0VGMIIINOVFxwVpVSDY2U045SkG1MzcXQS4u

We understand that you will have many questions and we are working closely with our partners to agree a plan that will ensure quality provision in a safe environment for all. Information booklets for the children and for you as parents will be available next week. These will hopefully answer many of your questions and concerns.

Thank you for your support over the past few months, it has been a very challenging time for us all, but at the same time the beginning of an exciting, new era in the life of our school family.

Kind regards,

Richard Jones

Headteacher