

ST. JOHN THE DIVINE PRIMARY SCHOOL

WARHAM STREET • LONDON • SE5 0SX • Tel: 0207 735 4898

Headteacher: Mrs. C. Warland • Deputy Head Teacher: Mr. J. Camilleri

Chair of Governors: Peter Truesdale • Parish Priest: Fr. Mark Williams

www.stjohn.lambeth.sch.uk Email: admin@sjtdprimary.org.uk Twitter & Facebook @ SJTDPrimary

Wednesday 13th May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Phased re-opening for Reception, Year One and Year Six

On Sunday 10th May, the Prime Minister announced the possibility of a phased return to school for children in Reception, Year One and Year Six, beginning on 1st June 2020. Any return, however, **remains subject to confirmation** and there is always the possibility that this date will change depending on the National picture.

As you will know, I have been considering the ways in which the school could safely reopen for groups of children, and all possible options have been considered before coming to the plan outlined within this letter. The science would indicate that it seems, at present, that the virus poses less of a risk to younger children. However, there is no consensus of opinion on how much children spread the virus; this is largely unknown at the moment. But given that children are highly effective spreaders of viruses such as vomiting bugs, diarrhoea and seasonal flu, there is a degree of assumption that it may also apply to Coronavirus. There is no doubt that they catch it, but are frequently asymptomatic. This is an area for us to be mindful of as the risk of children spreading the virus to staff or amongst families at home remains.

In order to facilitate social distancing and maintain the health and safety of all concerned, a phased reopening would most likely operate in split classes, on a **two week timetable**, with children alternating between attending school and learning from home, in week long blocks.

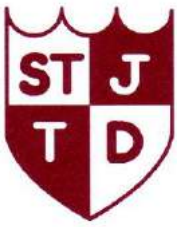
Where siblings cross the year groups noted above, these would always be accommodated on the same days and the children of critical workers and those considered vulnerable would continue to have the option of attending school every day.

The school day will, however, look very different to ensure that we can keep everyone in our school community safe and minimizing the risk of anyone spreading or contracting COVID -19

The proposed plan would include:

- Operation of a one-way system for parents and carers at drop-off and collection times
- Clear social distancing measures in and around the school which parents and carers **must** follow - failure to do so may impact on your child's ability to return to school
- Staggered start times for the children in the different year groups
- A shorter school day for all children
- Smaller class sizes
- One week in school, one week at home timetable
- Zoning of the school building for different year groups - and reallocation of classrooms to support smaller class sizes
- No mass gatherings - assemblies etc.
- Teachers being used to teach across the school – it is likely, depending on numbers and circumstances, that your child will be taught by someone who is not their class teacher





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- Limited formal learning progressing the curriculum will take place. Initial lessons will be focused on children's well-being – there will be a gradual build up to focused teaching over a period of weeks not days

Additional safety measures:

- Strict adherence to social distancing measures for all members of the school community
- Pupil groups will have no contact with each other, or other adults responsible for other classes during the course of the school day as far as is practicable
- Hand washing on arrival prior to entering the school building
- Children will be asked to bring their packed lunch to school in a disposable carrier bag - no other items are to be brought into school
- Set toilet facilities for each year group to avoid cross-contamination
- Dedicated hand washing times for all children
- Additional cleaning throughout the school day

Children are not required to wear PPE in school. Teachers, particularly those teaching the younger children who find socially distancing very difficult, have the right and the choice as to whether or not they wear PPE during the course of the day.

There are still many logistics to be considered, including the provision of lunches and the management of break times etc. and the proposals are subject to change; I cannot predict how many staff will be available here in school come 1st June to implement this plan.

However, to assist in planning, I need you to confirm by the end of the day on Friday 15th May 2020 whether or not you intend to send your child to school from 1st June. Below is the link to an online form for parents to complete. I ask that you complete the form even if you do NOT wish for your child to return to school

<http://stjohnsdivine.fluencycms.co.uk/COVID>

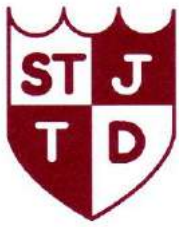
Once numbers are collected, further details as to how St John's will operate next term will be emailed to those parents who advised us that they will be sending their child back to school. There are no doubt, many questions that you will have - I have tried to answer those most frequently asked in the document attached.

These are very different times and we are all working hard to set in place a 'new normal'; thank you for your on-going support

Kind regards

Mrs Warland
Head Teacher





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Frequently asked questions

Below are the answers to the most common questions parents have sent in - further information for parents can also be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

I have a child in one of the year groups returning to school and a child in one of the classes not able to return (Nursery, Year Two, Year Three, Year Four and Year Five) can they all return to school?

The school will only support the return of pupils within Reception, Year One and Year Six. All other children must remain at home until further notice.

What will be provided for the children in Nursery, Year Two, Year Three, Year Four and Year Five?

We will continue to provide online work, and printed packs where required, for the children who are home learning as we have been doing since the 23rd March 2020. Online work will be set for children in Reception, Year One and Year Six for the weeks that they are not in school.

What happens if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 at St John's?

If a member of staff, or pupil test positive for COVID-19 the guidance is that all those who have come into contact with the individual must be sent home and they must self-isolate for 14 days. We will be adhering to this guidance.

I would like to return to work, but I'm not a critical worker and my child isn't in Reception, Year One or Year Six - can I send my child to school?

In short, and in line with government guidelines, no. If you are unable to find suitable childcare for your child then you will need to talk to your employer.

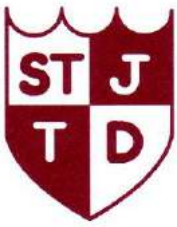
Do I have to send my child back to school?

The decision is entirely yours - there will be no penalties for parents who wish to keep their child at home.

Can I pick and choose when I send my child to school?

We cannot allow parents to opt in and out of the provision - there are too many variables that have to be controlled to keep everyone safe and decisions are made based on expected numbers; a change in numbers means a change in provision and we have limited capacity both in space and staffing to be making changes as we go along. Of course, the decision to send your child to school is one that you are likely to continue to review as more information becomes known to you. This is absolutely fine. Though in order to maintain as much safety as possible, I require at least 7 days' notice of this, which you can provide by email.





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Is there any other reason why the school may not open on 1st June?

You may have heard reports in the press that, at a national level, unions are opposing the reopening of schools until it is deemed safe to do so and they are advising their members in line with this. It may be that teachers are advised not to return to work; without sufficient staffing levels I would not be able to re-open the school.

