



ST PATRICK'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL BIRSTALL



Parent Information about Full Opening March 2021

26.02.21

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope you are all well and the pupils are looking forward to returning to school on Monday 8th March – I know all the staff are very much looking forward to having the pupils back in school. I thought it important to send you a further letter of information regarding the arrangements in school following the last lockdown period. Our school Risk Assessment is currently being updated and we have an additional Risk Assessment for the Lateral Flow Device testing of staff that I wrote to you about during lockdown. It is an excellent, additional part of our protective measures in school.

The organisation and arrangements within school as the pupils' return will mirror what happened in the Autumn term, which we feel was very successful. We will be focusing on ensuring a positive transition – both supporting the pupils' wellbeing and ensuring the learning is assessed carefully but in a non-threatening way (not using formal tests at this time). The teachers will ensure the planning reflects the changing needs of the pupils to ensure we support them in the recovery of lost teaching and learning. There is one change that we have made to try and further improve the drop off and collecting of pupils by reducing the number of slots and trying to combine what worked well in Autumn with the knowledge gained during the restricted opening during lockdown. This will be trialled in the weeks up to Easter to ensure it maintains pupils, staff and parent safety as much as we can.

I know we all recognise that keeping our children safe is everyone's responsibility. We can put all the measures we can into school, but they will not work if families are not following the same measures at home. In order to keep everyone safe, please make sure you continue to follow all government guidance, implement social distancing, wash hands regularly and when bringing or collecting your child from school ensure you wear a face covering and do not use that time to socialise with other parents, leaving straight away please. (This worked well for the most part in Autumn term)

Arriving and Leaving school: **(CHANGES HAVE BEEN MADE)**

It is VITALLY important that the whole school community understands the importance of keeping to the set arrival and collection time for the children in your family.

We will be **trialling** until the Easter holidays a drop off of only two slots where we are asking classes to arrive at the same time. If you have a child in the first drop off and they have siblings in the classes of the second drop off they can arrive at the early drop off. This will also be the same for collecting at the end of the day – the early classes and their siblings will all come out but in a safe and distanced manner. We have recognised that the Autumn term arrangements were hard both for families and for staff in the classroom beginning the learning – it is hoped this way will be easier but remain safe for parents and carers. I know that you will ensure you **always wear a face covering, keep good social distancing and maintain your own safety around the road** whilst you wait for your child to come out. In this way we can keep everyone safe and do not risk a school bubble closing through an outbreak or see any accidents to family members around the local roads. As we approach the end of the third week we will reassess so that information can be sent out in the final week should this need to change back to the use of family surnames again.

Please read through carefully as changes have been made:



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Classes and siblings only:	Drop off time (Start of the day) Please use the whole time so not all at once.	Collecting time (End of school day) Please use the whole time so not all at once
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• EYFS• Class 3 and Class 4• Kaleidoscope (KOOSH)• Birstall Pre-school	8:55am to 9:10am Pedestrian Gate: EYFS Pupils and siblings (KS1 wrap around providers) Driveway Gate: C3 and 4 pupils and siblings (Y5 and 6 wrap around providers)	3:10 – 3:25pm Pedestrian Gate: EYFS classes (Siblings in KS1 or those in R/KS1 going to wrap around providers) Driveway Gate: Class 3 and 4 (Siblings in C5/6 or those in KS2 going to wrap around providers)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• KS1 – Classes 1,1/2,2• Class 5 and Class 6• Counting House• Childminders	9:15am to 9:30am Pedestrian Gate: KS1 Pupils (EYFS wrap around providers) Driveway gate: C5 and 6 pupils – (Y3 and 4 wrap around providers)	3:30 – 3:45pm Pedestrian Gate: KS1 Pupils (EYFS going to wrap around providers) Driveway gate: C5 and 6 pupils – (Y3 and 4 going to wrap around providers)

We are currently looking at the physical arrangements, how we use the gates and other spaces for distancing when collecting and will update any changes over the course of next week.

Transition back into school:

We are carefully planning the transition back into school for all our home learners and those who have been in school during lockdown, to ensure it is smooth and the pupils feel calm, happy and safe in school once again. We will be having the music on during the arrival slots again (for a short time) as we had such great feedback that this helped the pupils. In the classrooms we will have a big focus on wellbeing, ensuring relationships between pupils themselves and also with staff are really positive and that the pupils are enjoying being back. Our focus with the learning is to support the pupils to build back their focus and concentration and through the daily lessons assess, in a non-threatening way, to find out what gaps there may be from the learning that took place over the lockdown period and build the planning from this assessment. We have been analysing already the essential parts of the English and Maths curriculum that may have been missed or need revisiting to support deep understanding moving forward. This is going to be made easier because of all the hard work that the pupils have been doing with their learning whilst at home – we certainly thank you for continuing to motivate and support your children in such challenging circumstances.

Staff will continue to wear face coverings whenever they are not in the classroom with their class bubble and may choose to wear one if they move closer to a pupil to support with their learning. In this way we are ensuring we are limiting the possibility of a transmission spread across the adults or with the pupils. Pupils are not expected to wear face coverings in school.

If you have any concerns or worries about your child before the return to school **please do not hesitate** to contact me by email, your class teacher through the class dojo or give school a ring to speak to their class teacher or Miss Smith our Deputy Head.



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Reminders from the Autumn Term:

Uniform: (As Autumn Term)

All pupils will be expected to wear full uniform to school once again, this includes plain back school shoes or plain black trainers with no big logo designs. On their PE day the pupils must wear their PE kit – School PE T-Shirt and plain black tracksuit bottoms, (we will begin using shorts again after Easter) a school jumper and trainers. They will bring their black pumps only on PE days and will not be changing into them each day (these cannot be left in cloakroom which must be emptied at the end of every day for a careful clean). Each day pupils must bring a coat for playtime/lunchtime outside, a lunchbox if having packed lunch, a water bottle and a SMALL bag / school book-bag for their reading book and to bring homework or letters home. The coat, lunchbox, water bottle and bag must be brought home daily so the cloakroom is emptied.

Drinks: (As Autumn Term)

Children should have their own named water bottle in school so that they can drink water through the day. This will be returned home for a thorough clean each day and needs to be returned so that the children can access water across the day. They are not allowed to bring juice, warm tea or any other drink – it is water only please.

Break Times: (As Autumn Term)

Classes will have staggered morning and afternoon breaks. They will have the same amount of break as normal but classes will have different times for breaks so that children are only with the children in their class or extended bubble. We have created phase bubbles (KS1 classes, Classes 3 and 4, Classes 5 and 6) to support with the staggered breaks. Each class will have their own box of break time equipment so that they are not sharing equipment with other classes. This equipment will be wiped down after each break time.

Pupils in Key Stage 1 will be able to interact outside in the fresh air with other pupils from across their extended KS1 bubble (Class 1, 1-2 and 2) this is to ensure we look after their mental well-being as much as possible and we will be having the extended bubble for Phonics and Maths teaching as in Autumn term. We will be supporting them to play games where they do not touch one another wherever possible. Classes in KS2 will have part of the playground space each so that although outside at the same time and can see each other they will not be interacting with pupils from other classes. They will rotate across the playground space so that they can access the trim trail or fitness trail on different days.

We know this worked very well in Autumn term and have made no changes.

Lunchtimes: (As Autumn term)

Lunchtimes have been reduced to 45 minutes whilst we have to have staggered starts, breaks, lunchtimes and collection at the end of the day – this is to ensure the learning time in class is not affected wherever possible.

School meals are available as normal and children will make their choice of hot meal in a morning – some eating in the hall and some classes in their classroom. We cannot accept any payment for meals in cash so please make payments through Parent Pay.

We have arranged lunchtimes so that children only have contact with the other children in their class, apart from KS1 where they are an extended bubble. The arrangements are as follows and the same as Autumn term:

Reception – at 11:30am children in Reception will go outside for 15 minutes (mainly using their own range of spaces – soon to include the new EYFS Physical trail) and then access the dining room for their lunch finishing at 12:15pm.



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Once the Reception pupils have returned to the EYFS unit there will be cleaning time in the hall to ensure it is ready for the KS1 classes by 12:30pm.

Class 1, Class 1-2 and Class 2 – at 12:15pm children will go out to play on the playground. From around 12:30pm one class at a time will walk up to the dinner hall, where they will either take their packed lunch to eat or get their school dinner. Each class will have their own table in the hall, as we are back inside the building. All children will remain seated until they have all finished eating when they will return to their classes for the afternoon at 1:00pm.

Class 3 and Class 4 – at 12:05pm children in these classes will have their packed lunch or a school dinner in their classroom. The school dinners will be brought to the classes by the lunchtime staff. Following time in class to eat their lunch the classes will have time on the playground – each class having a designated area to play in, accessing either the Trim Trail or Fitness trail. Lunchtime will finish at 12:50pm

Class 5 and Class 6 – at 12:30pm children in these classes will have their packed lunch or a school dinner in their classroom. The school dinners will be brought to the classes by the lunchtime staff. Following time in class to eat their lunch the classes will have time on the playground – each class having a designated area to play in, accessing either the Trim Trail or Fitness trail. Lunchtime will finish at 1:15pm.

Cleaning: (As in Autumn Term)

There are enhanced cleaning measures in place. This system for cleaning was in place last term and worked very well.

Each classroom has its own cleaning equipment. When one member of staff takes the class out for break time, the other member of staff wipes down surfaces in the classroom. Across the day the staff will ensure the surfaces are sanitised with the class cleaning equipment as they did so well in the last half term.

Other areas of school are cleaned by our caretaker Mr Senior throughout the day - this includes the toilets, door handles and shared spaces. The whole school is cleaned every afternoon after school by our super team of cleaners who are from Kirklees Contract Cleaning, led by Mr Senior.

Equipment: (As in Autumn Term)

Each child has their own pencil case provided by school (please do NOT send in equipment from home) with their everyday items in such as pencil, pen, glue stick and scissors. This is kept on their desk. This reduces the sharing of resources between children.

Chromebooks are allocated to each extended bubble to reduce sharing of devices from children in different bubbles. They are all to be wiped down carefully after each use and before they are returned to the charging trolley. Before and after pupils use the technology they will need to carefully wash their hands.

Books: (As in Autumn term)

Children will have their own reading book(s) that they bring home as normal. When they have finished this book(s) they will put it in a box before it is returned to the shelves with the other books. This means that any book that a child reads will not have been handled by another child for at least 72 hours to reduce cross-contamination. Each class will make specific arrangements for the day / days the books are changed – this information will be sent in the class newsletter at the beginning of the year.

Organisation of the Classrooms: (As in Autumn term)

The classrooms will look just as they did in the Autumn term which will be very familiar to the pupils. We feel this is important as it will support effective transition. We have followed all guidance in the arrangements of the tables as I explained in my letter at the beginning of the year. Staff will support children as they usually



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would when they need help with their learning. The teacher and teaching assistant who are based with that class will not need to socially distance from the children all the time as they are part of that bubble. They may choose to wear a face covering if they are coming very close to give individual support to keep themselves and the pupils as safe as possible. Sometimes the class will have another adult teach them such as a sports coach or PPA computing teacher. These teachers will maintain distance from the children as they work in a range of classes. One of the class bubble staff will always be there and provide any closer individual support. We have arranged the extended phase bubbles to reduce the amount of mixing from these staff across a day and to support the break and lunchtime arrangements.

Speaking to the class teacher: (As Autumn Term)

Parents are unable to come into school grounds at the start or end of the day so please drop your child off at their allocated gates where they will be met by a member of staff, much like the Autumn term. If you wish to speak to their teacher the best way to get in touch is through Class Dojo where their teacher can reply directly to your message. Alternatively, you can phone the office and they will arrange for the teacher to ring you back when they are not teaching. This new way of working was effective in the Autumn term and I am sure will continue to be whilst we have to put these measures in place.

Illness: (As Autumn term with isolation times reduced to 10 days following government guidance)

Please do not bring your child to school if they or any household member is displaying any symptoms of coronavirus or you have booked a test as a precaution. If a child develops symptoms of Coronavirus at school, we will ring parents immediately and the child will be taken to wait away from all other children in the medical room until they are collected. We will not expect them to wait alone due to their age – a member of staff who is looking after them will wear PPE and ensure they keep at a good distance wherever possible. The child and their fellow household members should all self-isolate for 10 days and apply for a test. If they test negative they can return to school and fellow household members can end their self-isolation. This result **MUST** be photographed and emailed to myself before they return to school. If they test positive, parents should inform school immediately by phone and again send a photograph of the test result to myself. School will contact the Local Authority and PHE and the rest of their class in school will be sent home at the end of the day (contact will be made with each family by phone as soon as we know the situation) and asked to self-isolate for 10 days unless we are advised the whole extended bubble needs to isolate. At this point the Remote Learning Policy 2020 will begin and you will access learning resources for your child on the TEAMS platform and there will also be a range of virtual live sessions as long as the class teacher remains well.

If your child is unwell with other childhood illnesses, please ensure they are fit for school and not displaying significant symptoms as we do not want to exacerbate the possibility of school closure for classes or extended bubbles. Where a staff member is ill for reasons other than Coronavirus – class bubbles will be kept open. This means the class will be covered with a supply teacher from the agency that we know, trust and have used regularly.

I hope you have found this information useful in calming any apprehension you may feel as the return to school fast approaches. Please do not hesitate to contact me by email or ring school if you have any worries or concerns you would like to discuss. As a staff we are very much looking forward to having all our wonderful pupils back in school full time and look forward to seeing them all on Monday 8th March.

Kind Regards

Mrs Clare Moulding

(Headteacher)



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Further Questions or Queries You May Have

As there have been a number of changes to our normal procedures this academic year, we have put together some possible questions you may have on return and we hope that this clarifies different aspects of school.

1. Will there be after-school clubs such as dance, football?

At the moment we are not able to run the regular range of after school clubs however we are hoping to be able to begin some catch-up sessions after school and hopefully some active sport style sessions for specific classes on different days after Easter. Dependent on any changes to the government guidance.

2. Can singing and music tuition still go ahead?

At the moment the updated guidance is that singing at normal volumes in a ventilated space is safe. We will be continuing with our diocesan singing programme where class groups will access the provision in the hall, in Autumn 2 Classes 5 and 6 accessed so it will now be Class 3 and 4. The choral director who leads the sessions will remain at the front and the pupils will sit facing forward with distance between each other, using the whole hall space. I know how much singing supports our mental well-being and so am very pleased the evidence says we can have this provision once again. I have not yet had contact with Kirklees Musica and so will update with regard music tuition once we know how we are moving forward. This had begun for some pupils before Christmas.

3. Will fire drill procedures have to change?

We will have a fire drill early in the first couple of weeks that will run in the same way as the Autumn term, ensuring we minimise the chance of children coming into contact with children from other classes. Obviously in the case of a real fire the whole school would evacuate at once as the risk of fire would be far greater than the risk of mixing bubbles. We continued to have fire drills during the Autumn term and in lockdown which were very effective.

4. Should my child wear fresh uniform every day?

We expect children to wear the correct school uniform. Full details of this can be found on our website, outlined above. Uniforms do not need to be cleaned any more often than usual, nor do they need to be cleaned using methods which are different from normal. We just ask that pupils always come to school clean wearing an appropriately clean uniform that follows the expectations.

5. What can we as parents do to help our children catch up with gaps in learning and skills?

The most important thing that you can do as parents is to read with your child every day, encourage them to read and talk to you about the book and to practise the spellings/times tables that their teacher sends home for them. Each week they will have some homework which will need to be completed and sent back following the guidance of the class teachers. I am sure that we can work closely as partners to ensure your child flourishes over the rest of this school year. We will be continuing with the parent – class teacher communication through the class dojo but ensuring this is used in a reasonable way as the teachers will be working very hard every day with their class of pupils and spending a lot of time after school ensuring they are ready for the next day.

Once we have made our early assessments of the pupils there may be further intervention opportunities after school for small groups of pupils with the adults from their class or additional staff we employ for Catch-up – such as the Rapid Write groups that have previously been before school.

6. Will we have a Spring Parent consultation?

When we transition the pupils back into school we will be using the few weeks up to Easter to assess where they are and build the planning and provision needed to support them effectively to make good progress. Ensuring that their wellbeing is a priority. After Easter we will endeavour to arrange for virtual parent consultations so that we can work together as partners – I will send out further information once the dates and arrangements have been made. We will also be sending a school report at the end of the year as we would normally do. Please do not hesitate to have contact with your child's class teacher in the meantime through class dojo or by ringing.