

St Mary's Church of England Primary School & Nursery

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Head Teacher : Cathie Lampert
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13th May, 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Preparing to Reopen the Nursery and School

I am writing to update you on our plans to begin to reopen from the Nursery and School from the start of June. However, before I do so, I want to acknowledge that this has been a challenging time for children and adults alike. The constraints of sheltering at home and the disruption to our usual routines have had a profound effect on all of us.

Firstly, I want to pay tribute to the School's staff who have made many wide-ranging adjustments to the way they work to support children both in school and at home. As a team and as individuals they have been superb.

Secondly, I want to reassure you that the safety of all children and all adults is our priority. Keeping everyone safe will be at the forefront of our minds in every decision we make.

Thirdly, I want to thank you for the understanding, patience and kindness that you have shown throughout this time to each other and the School. Over the past weeks I have seen and heard many acts of kindness across the community. I have been reminded of the quote by Ernest Hemmingway, "Courage is grace under pressure".

Changes Ahead - A Phased Approach

Following on from the announcements this week by the Prime Minister we now know that schools are to welcome back, in addition to our children in the Nursery (prioritising children who are moving to Reception in September), Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 classes only from 1st June. It is hoped that children in other year groups will also be able to return later in the term.

We are currently working to develop a clear plan so we can do this safely, following the government's guidance which is informed by scientific advice.

We know that young children will not be able to follow social distancing guidelines in school and so we will limit the size of groupings. Due to limitations of physical space, in order to run smaller groups of children, we are likely, when completing our Risk Assessment to consider a 'rota' for children to be in school. It may be that only half the class is in school at any one time. We will assign adults to work with the same group, in the same space, creating a "bubble" of children and adults.

We will plan to keep each 'bubble' separate from the other 'bubbles' in the school by staggering the daily timetables for each bubble, including the timings of arrival and collection, playtimes and practical adjustments. We will implement a thorough cleaning regime across the school and have clear protocols in place to manage children and adults in the event that they become unwell while on site.

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At the same time, we will continue to support the children of Key Workers and other children with specific vulnerabilities (EHCP and Social Care).

Any changes will be fully considered in detail and conditional on updated guidance and safety advice before they are implemented. We are in close communication with the Local Authority and we are actively liaising with professional bodies to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our staff team.

Understandably, it is going to take a few days to finalise a robust plan to open the school. Once it is complete and it has approved by the School's Governing Board and the Local Authority I will share it with you in detail.

However, we, or BANES, will not be pressuring anyone to send their children to school, since you know your children and personal situation best. We'll keep you updated with all our preparations for making sure the school is as safe as possible, so you can make an informed decision. Further information for parents and carers can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>

For now, please continue to make the most of your time together at home as best you can. We'd like to thank you for your continuous support in helping your child learn from home. We'll need to keep going with this for a while yet, so please do continue to do what you can and stay in touch with us about how your child is doing.

Teachers will continue to contact you directly. They are preparing for the changes whilst supporting home learning. Do keep an eye on our new Facebook Page and the school website as we try to keep you updated regularly.

Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you need help.

☐ Telephone 01761 434548 and leave a message.

☐ You can also send an email to: stmaryswrithlington_pri@bathnes.gov.uk

Take good care,

Ms Lampert



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