



The Christus Catholic Trust

working in partnership for the benefit of the children and communities we serve

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School

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Respect Ourselves, Respect
Others, Respect our School,
Love God

26th February 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

Reopening of schools.

In line with the Government's latest announcement regarding the reopening of schools, we will fully reopen to all pupils on the **8th March 2021**.

From 8th March, all children in year groups Reception through to year 6 will have to attend school all day. There is no option for parents to keep their children at home.

Please note that pupils in Nursery will continue to attend as they are currently doing. I am sorry but lunchtime provision is currently unavailable.

On their return to school, all pupils (including those who previously have attended school as children of key/critical workers) will be in their class bubbles as they were in the autumn term. All bubbles will be year group based, so all the pupils in a particular year group will be educated together in a class.

It will not be possible to socially distance when all the children return but we will minimise movement around the classrooms and around the school building. Children will be able to mix with other children in their bubble, but bubbles will not be mixing.

Please note that children will not be wearing masks or face coverings in line with Government guidance. Any child who arrives at school wearing one will be asked to remove it.

All children will be expected to wear full school uniform with shoes rather than trainers although we do realise that the shops are shut and this might not be possible.

In class, children will all sit as before facing the front maintaining a 2-metre distance from the teacher. Any adult who works with a child in close proximity, will be wearing a face mask. This is for the safety of the adult.

Children will have access to limited learning resources, which will be cleaned daily. In Reception class and Nursery, the children will not sit at tables facing the front as it is impossible to do this each day for such young children. It would also inhibit the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum to do this as such young children learn through play.

Regular handwashing will continue throughout the day. Break time and lunch times will be staggered to prevent bubbles from mixing together.



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Staggered timings will also operate at the beginning and end of the school day with different drop off and collection times.

As the children have been away from direct teaching for so long, the curriculum will be tailored to address the learning gaps that have been created during the Lockdown periods.

P.E. lessons

P.E. will take place as usual so please ensure that your child has their full PE kit in school. They will need to bring it into school on the first day back.

School dinners/lunch

If your child does not want a school dinner, they may bring in a packed lunch.

Should your child want a school dinner then they will be available in the same way they were before Lockdown. The cost per day payable in advance is £2.30 for pupils in years 3, 4, 5 and 6. Please remember if your child is in Reception, year 1 or year 2 they are entitled to Universal Free School meals which is paid for by the government.

Children will eat their lunch in the dining hall with their Bubble. Year groups will be staggered to allow for clear spacing in the seating arrangements.

Please note that the office will not be able to accept any late packed lunches so please ensure there is enough money on your account to cover any dinner expenses.

What to bring into school

Children are to bring in their reading books and water bottles each day. Please ensure the water bottles are labelled with your child's name and ensure that they are cleaned on a daily basis before they are brought to school.

Please do not send your child into school with unnecessary bags, pencil cases etc. As before, each child will have all that they need to do their work, provided in school.

Starting and ending the school day:

The arrangements for the beginning and end of the school day are as follows:

Please note the changes in times and places of entry/leaving which have been made so that we do not have too many children in one area. You are asked to stick to your times and to avoid congregating outside the school gate. Please ensure that only one adult accompanies a family to school to prevent congestion.

Anyone under 18 years of age is not permitted to drop off or collect a child.

Entry and Exit times

Nursery:

Nursery to arrive between **8.20 am until 8.30 am**, entering through the **Nursery gate** on Dock Road. Children to be collected as usual at **11.30am or 3.30 pm** depending on the session.

Reception class:

Reception class to arrive between **8.45 am and 8.55 am**, using the **Nursery gate**. Children to be collected at **3.10 pm** through the **Nursery gate**.

Year 6

To enter through the **green gate** on Calcutta Road at **8.30 am** and leave at **3 pm**.

Year 5

To enter through the **green gate** on Calcutta Road at **8.40 am** and leave at **3.10pm**.

Year 4

To enter through the **green gate** on Calcutta Road at **8.50 am** and leave at **3.20pm**.

Year 3

To enter through the **main school (black) gates** at **8.30 am** and leave at **3 pm**.

Year 2

To enter through the **main school (black) gates** to arrive at **8.40 am** and leave at **3.10 pm**.

Year 1

To enter through the **main school (black) gates** to arrive at **8.50 am** and leave at **3. 20 pm**.

Breakfast Club

From March we will no longer be running a Breakfast club.

After-School Clubs

After school club provision is being reviewed at this time. More details will come out in due course.

Free School Meal Provision

If you think you may qualify for free school meals for your child, not Universal Free School Meals which all pupils in Reception year 1 and 2 are eligible to receive, then please click on the link to make an application to Thurrock Local Authority

<https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/school-meals/free-school-meals>

Safety

Please note that the cleaning of the school has to be carried out between sessions and before/after school, so your child will need to be dropped off and collected promptly.

Parents/Carers are asked not to congregate at the school gates but to maintain social distancing at all times and wear a mask at the school gates to prevent the virus from spreading. Your support with this would be much appreciated.

Children are to enter the school grounds in their year groups and not in mixed groups. This is very important as the children will need to do this during the school day.

Please note that no adults will be permitted to come onto the school site for any reason. Any communication with school is to be via email or phone call and not in person.

No one is to enter the lobby to speak in person to the office staff or to drop anything off. This is to protect my staff and of course yourselves.

Coming back

We understand that the children might feel a range of emotions at returning to school but from our experience of those children who have already returned, they are very good at adapting to different situations and will soon settle.

Once they are back into a routine and see the staff and their classmates again, any worry will soon disappear.

Here are some ideas to help with getting your child ready for starting back at school.

Start to introduce a regular bed time (if they don't have one already) over the next week as part of a regular bedtime routine.

Run through with your child the routine for getting ready for the first day back and all the days thereafter – laying out their school uniform, finding their reading book, knowing where their shoes are, what they want to have for lunch – packed lunch or school dinner and so on.

Talk to your child about any concerns they might have about coming back to school (We will be sending them a short survey via Teams about how they are feeling so that we are prepared to support them at school.)

Try not to dismiss any concerns they have however small. With our years of experience as adults, what may seem small and of no consequence to us, might be very worrying to a child.

For yourselves

After such a long time at home, for many of you seeing your child off to school might invoke a series of emotions – some expected and some not.

Have a loose plan in place for what you will be doing on the first day your child is back at school. From experience, it will really help you.

I realise that we are still on the road out of Lockdown with many facilities not open to us (hairdressers, the pub etc) and so the choice of what we can do is limited but be aware of how easily your child can pick up on your emotions and if they sense that you are upset,

then that will make them feel uncertain and worried, however if you wish to cheer and laugh out loud then please do!

Remember to give yourselves a big pat on the back for all your hard work in Lockdown – your support for your child's learning in the past year has been truly amazing – a big thank you to you all.

Lastly, we cannot wait to see the children again, we have really missed them and know that we are going to have a really fun time back as St Mary's community.

See you all soon!

Best wishes

M Jones

Headteacher

