

Saint Mary's Catholic Primary School



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10th July 2020

RE: Weekly Update for all parents

Dear Parents

As we come to the end of this very unusual academic year we look forward to better things in 2020-2021! **This term will end for most children next Thursday with school open for Key Worker children only on Friday 17th** – timings for both days stay as they have been for the last few weeks with bubbles having their own start and finish times.

We have been working up our plan for September – really for the first half of term – and I want to share some of this with you now. As you know **the Government expects all children to be in school** and they are asking us to monitor attendance and follow the Local Authority's procedures. **This means that I will be suspending the 'unusual attendance' arrangements (the attendance trial whereby any child with over 97% attendance can have authorised absence) which has been in place since the summer of 2017.** If you have already received advanced authorisation for time away during term time this will stay in place for you – only 1 family has applied.

In the new term we will build on the systems that we put in place since opening to more children on 8th June. **Children will be in year group bubbles (approx. 60 in each) so that they can be taught in groups and by adults across the year group.** We will continue to monitor temperatures when they arrive but **children must be in school uniform (summer or winter or whatever fits) and they will be allowed bags and packed lunches. Infant children must have school lunches and juniors can if they are booked through Parent Pay in the usual way.** Children will continue to eat in classrooms as they do now.

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They will still have a named class teacher but the children may be taught by any of the year group team and sometimes in smaller groups. **Start times, playtimes, lunchtimes and end times will all be staggered as in a similar way to now.** Timings will go out to you via the school app next week along with 'goodbye' and 'welcome' videos from the staff working in the current and new year groups.

Nursery and Reception will have stay and play at the beginning of September – these times have been sent out to you. We will use Wednesday 2nd and Thursday 3rd as training days (in our procedures and in our recovery curriculum). These two days are particularly important for staff who are returning to work having been shielding. All other children will return to school on Monday 7th September – please note this change.

On Friday 4th September we will welcome back all the children who have not been in since 20th March.

To clarify – if your child has been in school – even for a short time – they should not come in on 4th September. This includes Key Worker children. On Monday 7th we'll be open for everyone. We hope that this will go some way to provide a quieter start for those children and parents who have not been in since March.

Nursery and Reception children will start later in staggered groups with shorter days to start with – information on timings has gone out to everyone who has children in Nursery and Reception in September.

Children in Y1,2,3,4,5 and 6 will need to come into school on Fridays in PE kit (not those coming in on the 4th though) as our normal Friday organisation will be in place from 11th September. Both Y1 classes will be doing PE on Fridays from September so they will need to be in PE kit too from 11th.

The Government guidance which was published a couple of weeks ago makes it clear that schools will not be quite back to normal in September. For one thing children will need to be in rows all facing the front with the teacher at the front and minimising circulation round the room. You might call this a 'Chalk and Talk' approach. This means that the teacher can model work and demonstrate to the class and individuals but they won't work collaboratively like they normally do at St Mary's. In order to support all of the children we are looking at expanding our laptop and iPad provision as experience in the summer term has shown how valuable these devices are when children are working 'on their own' in class. **It may be that we ask children to bring in their own device – a tablet or laptop – if they have one.** I'll update you on this.

At the start of the year we'll use the resources from PiXL to assess the children and identify gaps in reading, writing and number – what we used to call the 3 Rs. This doesn't mean we will only teach English and maths as reading and writing (and number to a lesser extent) are all around us and are across all subjects. In some

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year groups Maths No Problem! might not start straight away. We will continue this curriculum for as long as is needed (and this will depend on the teachers' assessments) so our curriculum will have a sharper focus on reading, writing and number. At the same time we will be increasing the time we spend on supporting wellbeing and we will use PiXL resources from their recovery pack to help with this.

We will continue to do as much as we can online so that you can support at home. We will upload the learning for the week as we are now so that if we close or your family are isolating there will be home learning packs available. If we do have an outbreak (and staff may be affected too) we will direct you to the Oak National Academy resources.

We'll be encouraging you not to come into school so if you have any queries please email them in. Our Autumn curriculum meetings will be online and we won't use the halls for lunches, there will be no assemblies, masses or hymn practices. Sadly there won't be any Christmas concerts next term as we are directed not to gather together or even to sing in school. We are hoping that 'Sunnysmiles at St Mary's' will run the breakfast and afterschool provision but other clubs will not run straight away as the staggered end times make this very difficult. We will review this at the October half term.

It will all be slightly different but we are all really looking forward to having all the children back and getting off to a really organised start. **Please look out for your child's start and end times which will come out via the Parent Hub (App) next Wednesday.** As now, it will be important to arrive at the right time – not early or late – as we will be trying to avoid crowding in the car park.

If you have any questions please email the school.

Thank you for your continued support.

St Mary! Pray for Us!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'F Marsh', written in a cursive style.

F Marsh

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