



Dear Parents,

We hope you had an enjoyable and peaceful Summer holiday. Last year was a time like no other and was an incredibly challenging period for all of us. As much as we would like to say that things are 'back to normal' unfortunately, that is not quite the case. This new version of 'normal' will be around for quite some time, and everything that is planned and outlined over the coming year will have to come with the caveat of being subject to change.

However, one thing is definite – that we are all incredibly excited about seeing all of the children again. It hasn't been the same without them and this whole period has reminded us what a privilege it is to work with your children.

As all schools plan for a full reopening next week, certain measures have had to be put in place, based on current Government guidance. As above, this may well change as the weeks and months progress and we will endeavour to give as much notice as possible to any changes, but sometimes guidance does change within a very short space of time, as anyone who travelled abroad this Summer may be aware!

Rather than overfill this first letter with too much information, I will keep this fairly brief and just give headline information for the first few weeks. Then as the children have settled in to routines, I will send out further updates.

Dates

- Staff return on Tuesday 1st September.
- Children return on Wednesday 2nd September.
- Term dates are published on the school website.
- Other usual dates (e.g. parents evenings, Sacraments, trips etc) will be pencil published in the next few weeks.

Bubbles

One of the key measures published in the Government guidance is to keep contact with others to as minimal as possible. Schools are asked to create 'bubbles' so that children only mix with others from within their own bubble. This includes break times, lunch times etc. For operational purposes, our bubbles are:

- EYFS
- Years 1 & 2
- Years 3 & 5
- Years 4 & 6



Timings

In a further measure to avoid mixing and contact, schools are advised to stagger the drop off and collection times. We have tried to do this with the minimum amount of disruption to usual arrangements. However, we must ask that you do keep to the timings below as closely as possible.

Year	Drop off time	Pick up time	Entry/Exit point
EYFS	8.50 - 9.00am	3.00pm	EYFS entrance
Year 1	8.50 - 9.00am	3.15pm	Year 1 Door
Year 2	8.50 - 9.00am	3.15pm	KS2 Playground
Year 3	8.55 - 9.05am	3.20pm	KS2 Playground
Year 4	9.00 - 9.10am	3.25pm	KS2 Playground
Year 5	9.00 - 9.10am	3.25pm	Via Main Office
Year 6	9.00 - 9.10am	3.30pm	Stair case outside main office

- Please only one adult on site to drop off and collect
- Please keep to timings and avoid arriving earlier than necessary
- Please discourage children from mixing with other year groups if waiting
- Please wait for the year group to be called to enter
- We are also minimising the adults entering the building. As much as possible please phone or email the school office (schooloffice@stjosephs-birkenhead.wirral.sch.uk 0151 652 6781) with any messages. If you do need to enter, for example to hand over medication, please come to the school office and wait to be let in one at a time.

Uniform

The science is telling us it is now safe for school uniform to be worn, so please can all children wear full school uniform. However, if you have not been able to purchase new uniform, appropriate and smart 'own clothes' may be worn for the first few weeks until uniform is purchased. If you have any old items in good condition you wish to donate, please place them in the basket outside the office. Please email in any requirements and if any items come in we will contact you. Once PE lessons are running we will let you know arrangements regarding PE kits.

Lunch

School lunch is running as normal. The children may bring in a packed lunch or have a school meal. The current menus are published on our website. We are staggering the lunch break so that the bubbles detailed above will be having their lunches together.

Firbobs

Our before and after school provision, Firbobs, is operating as usual. Firbobs have their own guidance



and legislation but will be in operation for any parents who require it. Please contact Carrie on 07709807400 if you wish to make a booking.

Systems

As part of our Risk Assessment, we will be following the Governments System of Controls, including

- 1) Minimising contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have Coronavirus symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend school
- 2) Cleaning hands thoroughly more often than usual
- 3) Ensuring good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'Catch it, bin it, kill it' approach
- 4) Introducing enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products such as detergent and bleach
- 5) Minimising contact between individuals and maintaining social distancing wherever possible.

Curriculum

Our first few weeks back in school will focus on the health and wellbeing of the children, framed within a 'Recovery Curriculum'. This is a scheme of work we have put together to help the children with their understating and reflections of what they have lived through. We will support them to reconnect and rebuild. Once the children are in a stable place, we will then make formative assessments regarding their learning, plug gaps and help them to build from where they left off last year.

Plan B

The Government do not envisage a full national lock down again, and rather will implement local lockdowns, such as occurred in Leicester. In the event that we do have a Local lockdown, we have plans in place to continue to support the children using Google Drive. Please can you ensure you are up and running with this platform as we will also be making more use of this technology in our day to day curriculum.

Thank you for taking the time to read through this information and thank you in advance for your support with implementing all of these measures. We genuinely cannot wait to welcome the children back to school next week, but we cannot allow this excitement to cloud our judgement – all of the things we are putting in place are for the safety of the children, you and your families and the staff. Thank you.

With best wishes

Mr Turner