



Dear Parents,

As previously confirmed, your child has been allocated an F2 place at our school from 1st July, in line with Government recommendations that certain year groups should be prioritised.

Please take the time to familiarise yourselves with the details and arrangements below. This includes parents of children who have been using our childcare up to now, as with expanding the provision, we are making some adjustments to the way it is run. We are taking the health and safety of the children, staff and families very seriously, therefore we must insist on the measures being adhered to. We apologise for any 'harshness' but the welfare of all is being given top priority.

Children must not attend if they (or any member of the household) have any symptoms of Coronavirus (e.g. persistent cough, high temperature or loss of or change in your normal sense of taste or smell). If any of the above symptoms present, the household must self-isolate for a period of 14 days. If a child becomes unwell whilst in our care, you will be contacted immediately and the child will be quarantined in our designated room with an adult for supervision until collection. If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 by either an adult or child within a group, all members of that group will be asked to self-isolate for 14 days in line with government guidance.

We must also ask you to ensure that if your child does develop the above symptoms, you book a Covid test and let us know the results as soon as you receive them. The outcome of the test determines the steps we have to take for the rest of the group, so to protect others, we ask that you do have a test done and let us know

Presently, the children have been allocated into one of two groups (F2 Lester, F2 Langley). The number of groups may change depending on how many parents choose to send their children in.

Each group is kept separate and have staggered break times, lunch times, drop off and collection. It is very important that children from different groups do not have contact with each other – this is to stop any potential 'cross contamination.'

Our first line of defence against the virus is regular cleaning and minimising contact. We therefore are staggering aspects of the day.



Firstly, please be aware of arrangements for drop off

- F2 Langley – 9.30am – 9.40am using the EYFS entrance outdoor area
- F2 Lester – 9.50am – 10.00am using the EYFS entrance outdoor area
(If your child is already attending as a Key Worker, your timings are different and we ask you to keep to your 'usual' times)

Please keep to these times. Please follow Government guidelines and try to avoid public transport when travelling to school. Walking or cycling is preferable. If you are late dropping off, we must ask you to remain at a distance while the next group arrives and wait until they are clear.

We can now only allow one parent/carer arriving on site when dropping your child at school or collecting at the end of the day. Parents will not be permitted to enter the building. If there is an urgent message you need to relay to school staff, please email schooloffice@stjosephs-birkenhead.wirral.sch.uk Strict social distancing measures will be enforced on the school site for the safety of all adults and children. We therefore request that you maintain social distancing at all times. We ask you to please keep to these guides, and do not gather together in groups as adults and ensure your children do the same. We do understand that as parents you may want to catch up with friends yourself, or your children may see someone they haven't seen for a while. It is incredibly hard for us to have to say this, but we really must – so please, no hugs (other than your own children) and always keep at least 2m apart from other parents and children. We know this goes against human instinct – but at the moment, this is what we must do to prevent the spread of the virus.

We ask for the same measures during the collection stage.

The arrangements for collection

- F2 Langley – 2.00pm – 2.10pm from the EYFS outdoor area
- F2 Lester – 2.20pm – 2.30pm from the EYFS outdoor area

Again, if you are already using the Key Worker facility, your timings are different – please use the same timings you are used to, but drop off/collection from EYFS.

If your intention is for your child to only attend on a part time basis, that can be accommodated, as long as you please inform us and keep the days set.



Clothing and other items

We ask that children wear a fresh set of their own clothes (not uniform) each day and that they bring their own labelled water bottle. **We must insist at this time that no other items are brought into school other than lunch.**

Lunch

If possible, please can the children bring a packed lunch to school. This means we have fewer adults on site as we do not need our catering team to come in. However, if this is not possible and you do need a school meal, we can provide one. This will not be a hot meal, and will be a prepared cold wrap/sandwich, cake/biscuit and fruit. Please let us know if you will require a school meal. The children will eat in their room, supervised by a member of staff and then go to an outdoor area. Wherever possible, please avoid fabric style lunch boxes as these cannot be wiped clean. The ideal would either be disposable paper bags, or a plastic bag which can be folded and put in a pocket/tray to bring back or a plastic box which can be wiped clean.

The day

We have tried to design a curriculum as close to 'normal' as possible, so will include phonics, reading, PHSE and other aspects of the EYFS Framework. However, some areas have had to be removed, including water trays, some role play areas and any resources which cannot be easily cleaned e.g. soft furnishings. A big focus will be on transition work, social and emotional, well-being and ensuring the children feel prepared for the move to Year 1. Other lessons such as PE, PHSE, health and hygiene etc will also take place. We have structured the day so each group has their own outdoor area/time, and there will be periods spent outdoors. Therefore, where relevant, please apply sun cream to your child in the morning.

Groups of children will not mix during the day, which may mean they will not interact with some friends who may also be in school. Children within groups will be encouraged to maintain social distancing as much as is possible.



Cleaning

We would like to reassure parents and carers that there will be thorough cleaning of all classrooms and equipment and toilets before children's arrival and at regular points throughout the day. We have adjusted working hours for staff so that there will be a cleaner onsite during the day to ensure that rooms and 'hot spots' are regularly cleaned. This virus is going to be with us for a long time, and changes to behaviour in society are going to be essential. We will therefore be modelling to the children why it is so important to establish good practices for hygiene and cleanliness.

Classrooms and toilets will be thoroughly cleaned at the end of each day. Hand washing will be timetabled regularly throughout the day and children will be consistently reminded of its importance in controlling the spread of germs.

As much as possible equipment will also be regularly cleaned, but this may mean that some equipment, particularly soft furnishings may have to be removed.

PPE

Following government guidance, Staff and children are **not** expected to wear masks at school but if you do choose to send your child in wearing a mask, that is fine. However, masks do not remove risk altogether, so all of the other protective measures in place remain applicable. First Aiders will wear appropriate PPE when dealing with incidents.

If a child becomes unwell, either with known symptoms (**e.g. persistent cough, high temperature or loss of or change in your normal sense of taste or smell**) or complains of any other illness, you will be contacted immediately and the child will be quarantined in a designated room, supervised by an adult until collection. We must ask that you come to collect as soon as you can – we do understand that this may be difficult if you are working, but we cannot take any risks. Children often find it hard to pinpoint exactly where they feel ill, especially younger children, so they may just say they are 'not well' and can't articulate that they feel feverish or can't taste etc.

If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19, by either an adult or child within a group, all members of that group will be asked to self-isolate for 14 days in line with government guidance. We must ask you to ensure you get your child tested if they show symptoms and inform us of the results as soon as possible as the result does impact the steps we need to take for the rest of the group.



Behaviour

We are very proud of our standards and expectations of behaviour at St Joseph's. This is even more critical at this time. We completely understand that children may be anxious upon their return to school, especially when school life will be very different and staff will be very sensitive to this. However, it is vital that we continue to uphold the highest levels of expectations with behaviour – children must listen to adults, and respect and follow all instructions at all times.

We are confident that the children will continue with their great behaviour as we know how they are usually and we remain immensely proud of them and thank you for working with us on behaviour. We understand that the environment may appear strange and unusual to them, and we will support and nurture them through these difficult times. However, we must be very clear that if we have any instances of unacceptable behaviour, including issues both from the 'old world' – disrespect, unkindness, damage to property etc and issues from this 'new world' – deliberately breaking social distancing instructions, spitting etc, these will be treated very seriously and may in extreme cases mean we have to withdraw the offer of a place.

Thank you for taking the time to read through this letter – as we continue to say, there is nothing we want more than to open to all children, get back to 'normal' and welcome the children with open arms – we really do miss them immensely!

However, unfortunately, we are still a way off 'normal' and so we are having to put these measures in place, and enforce them in order to keep the children, staff and families as safe as possible. We care about them too much to place any unacceptable risk on them.

We would also like to thank you for all your kind messages of support at this time. Seeing the children on Twitter and remaining in contact, as well as all of your lovely words to the staff has really been a boost to us all during these difficult times.

However, we want to also send our thanks to you. We know you are working in Key roles to keep the NHS, deliveries, systems, society and the economy going and at the same time juggling home learning and support for your children. We are all doing our part to protect the nation from this virus, so want to thank you for the work you are doing.

Best wishes

Mr Turner