



18th May 2020

Dear Family

Many thanks for your continuing support and patience. We wanted to make sure that we were able to offer you a clear and comprehensive plan in order for you to make an informed choice about the wider opening of school on June 1st as proposed by the Government.

All primary schools have been asked to welcome children back in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 and to continue to offer places to vulnerable children and children of key workers who have been in school since the end of March. We recognise that our children and staff are very keen to return to St James's Primary School as soon as possible. However, many of you will also be very worried about what this might look like and how we can minimise any risk to your child's health and wellbeing. Please be assured that the health, safety and wellbeing of our pupils, staff and families is the most important thing to us and we will not be opening school further until we are satisfied that arrangements are in place to support the safety of all. I hope that this letter goes some way to answering any questions that you have and assist you in making an informed decision. As a school, we have access to the same information, guidance and advice that you do as families. We have used this to inform a detailed plan of action and risk assessment that has been shared with the school's governors and staff. Using the information that we have, school leaders and governors have decided that our safest course of action is a phased return to begin with **only inviting pupils from Year 6 and Reception** to return to school on the week beginning the 1st June. **Year 6 will be invited to return from Monday 1st June and Reception from Tuesday 2nd June.** Vulnerable children and children of key workers will continue to attend from the 1st June. If you require a key worker place for your child please contact the school office. Please do not send your child to school unless we have confirmed that there is a place for them. Our plan for wider opening will be under constant review and we will let you know if we are able to extend the invitation to other year groups, as soon as we are able.

You will appreciate that with social distancing measure in place and heightened hygiene measures, a day in school will look completely different from a normal day prior to lock down. It is only fair to share these changes with you. Please note that there is no obligation to send your child and there will be no repercussions should you choose to keep your child at home. Home learning will continue to be provided for all year groups.

In preparation for opening, school have taken into account the measures set out in the government documentations. These include:

- A staggered start and finish of the day, including staggered break time and lunches to minimise contact.
- Ensuring school has enough sanitiser with children washing hands on entry to school with sufficient staff to supervise regular handwashing/ toileting arrangements throughout the day.
- Maintaining social distancing for older pupils and where possible for younger children, by following the government's hierarchy of safety measures that include: avoiding anyone with symptoms, frequent hand washing and good respiratory hygiene practices, regular cleaning of the setting, minimising contact and mixing of groups.

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- Children will be grouped up to a maximum of 10. This is in line with the Local Authorities risk assessment that we should maintain a 2m distance between children, wherever possible.
- Children will be grouped according to their position on the class register. This means that 2 groups of children will be with a teacher other than their class teacher and in a room other than the one that they are familiar with. Each group of children will have a teacher and a teaching assistant allocated to them. These adults will remain with the children throughout the day. Children will socialise and eat lunch within their group.
- Should anyone within the group display symptoms, the entire group, including adults, will need to remain at home for a period of 14 days self-isolation or until testing has indicated that it is safe to return.
- Children will be provided with their own equipment. No equipment, other than lunch where appropriate and a water bottle, should be sent in from home. This will mean that we are no longer able to swap home reading books. Please send your child with their home reader on the first day for collection.
- The library and shared play areas will either be closed or timetabled for use.
- All soft toys, toys with intricate and difficult to clean parts and games requiring multiple players will be removed.
- Children will not be required to wear school uniform. It is up to parents whether they wish to send their child into school in uniform. We are mindful that some children will have outgrown their uniforms or that you may wish to send your child in something practical and washable.
- School will be thoroughly cleaned before and after school. This will mean that school staff will need to vacate the building as soon as they are able and no later than 4.15 pm.

What will be required of parents?

In order that we are able to reduce the footfall into school we are asking parents to cooperate with the following:

- Punctual arrival for drop off and pick up in the time slot allocated – see below.
- No congregating – please drop your child to the supervising adult at the gate allocated to your year group and leave promptly.
- Any queries will need to be done via telephone (01384 818810) or email (info@st-james.dudley.sch.uk). It is vital that the drop off and pick up routine is as quick as possible so please do not try to engage with school staff during this time.
- We will not be able to have any visitors into school. Please do not come to school unless it has been previously arranged.

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

| Group | Start time | End time | Gate |
|-------------------------|------------|----------|--------|
| Vulnerable + Key worker | 0830 | 3.30 | Gate 2 |
| 6W | 0850 | 3.00 | Gate 1 |
| 6S | 0900 | 3.10 | Gate 1 |
| RP | 0915 | 2.30 | Gate 2 |
| RT | 0930 | 2.45 | Gate 2 |

Gate 1 – new, additional gate. Gate 2 – original gate with buzzer to the office

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This is not an exhaustive list and is our starting point. The government has recognised that by implementing these measures this should lower, not remove, transmission in school. The information shared will allow you to see the challenges that we will face. For younger children, their natural tendency is to participate in small groups and they will need careful supervision to check they are carrying out hand washing and hygiene routines, properly. With this in mind, it would be helpful if you are intending to send your child back to school, to communicate and prepare your child for the changes. There are also a number of resources available on our website that will support your child's understanding of the need for hygiene.

We will do our very best to maintain social distancing but cannot guarantee that your child will not come within 2 metres of another person. In situations relating to first aid or comforting a child, we will need to come within that distance. We will inform you if this has been the case for your child. Please take this into consideration if you have members of your household who are considered vulnerable.

To enable us to be as ready and prepared as we can be, we are asking **parents of pupils in Reception and Year 6 only**, to complete a survey to confirm whether you are intending to send your child into school. Please click the following link:

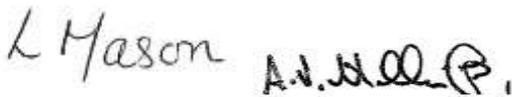
<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=j3FOYWqZgUqI0X8W5r7dXunbLznhUmdlj7535zWatDBUNKGT08xNVRaNIQ0RjFZWjBIWUpSSTNINC4u>

Please respond by 1pm Friday 22nd May.

Please be assured that the safety of pupils, staff and families remains paramount throughout this phased return and we will provide as much information as we are able to over the coming days and weeks.

Thank you for your support and co-operation during this challenging time.

Yours sincerely



Mrs L Mason (Head teacher) Mr A Millichip (Chair of Governors)

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