



St Margaret Mary's RC Primary School
St Margaret's Road
New Moston
Manchester
M40 0JE

Tel & Answerphone: (0161) 681 1504
Fax: (0161) 682 5495

Mr M Sutton, Headteacher

e mail: contact @st-margaretmarys.manchester.sch.uk
website: www.st-margaretmarys.manchester.sch.uk
twitter account: @stmargaret_mary

Thursday 3rd September 2020

St Margaret Mary's Letter: Back to School

Dear Children, Parents and Carers,

I hope that this letter finds you all well, safe & healthy after what I hope has been a restful summer. We are so excited to be completing our final preparations for welcoming all of our children back to school on Monday 7th September. I write to you with the final details ahead of Monday, following further DfE & Government changes that have taken place in the last few days & over the summer holidays, since school closed in July. As you will no doubt be aware the government has set out its plan for the return of children to schools that are based around the two following principles: **limiting contact between pupils & staff wherever possible & implementing increased hygiene measures for all**. Keeping all of our children & staff as safe as possible is the absolute priority for us. However this does mean that we will be implementing changes to the way that we have to work & operate. In some cases this will be significant & in others there will be slight amendments. I am also very much aware that this will impact upon all of us; from children, staff & parents. It is therefore essential that everyone abides by the new guidance & that we all as a school community adhere to the new routines & procedures that are established, to ensure the safety of everyone. A very detailed risk assessment has been completed by the school to ensure that we are as Covid secure as possible. This has been authorised by the Governing Body & submitted to & approved by the LA in-line with the DfE Guidance for schools.

Government guidelines recognise that pupils will be unable to fully socially distance from one-another all of the time, but they ask that schools put systems in place to support this. As I am sure you can appreciate this places schools in a very difficult situation. The risk assessment & the new ways of working for us are designed so that children & staff are able to work in their 'class bubbles' & able to maintain social distancing **wherever possible. It is important to recognise that we will endeavour to maintain social distancing where reasonably possible, but this may not always be practical.**

How we will Operate: As highlighted before the holidays, we will be organising the school into four distinct areas; **EYFS/KS1/Lower KS2/Upper KS2**. Each area will be made-up of classes & groups of children being taught in 'bubbles'. A reminder that each class will be a 'bubble' within a larger group, to allow for the safe & effective running of the school. See below:

- **Early Years** will become three bubble classes that will be part of a larger 'bubble/group'. The children will still be in their three classes & registration groups, but will obviously access the same door, toilets, resource areas & playground space etc...
- **KS1** will form a self-contained 'bubble/group' in their building, which is also self-contained. Within this larger group like in EYFS, they will work in their **three class bubbles**, but access the same door, toilets & resources space etc...



- Further up the school we will have two larger bubble groups that will consist of:
- **Lower KS2** [Y3/Y3-4/Y4] who will work in their **three class bubbles** & larger bubble & access the same door/toilets/shared resources in this part of the school building.
- **Upper KS2** [Y5/Y6] who will work in their class bubbles & larger bubble & access the same door/toilets/shared resources in this part of the school building.
- *N.B. The children will work & play in their individual class/bubble throughout the day & avoid contact with children in other classes wherever possible.
- Each area will have its own set of staff who will for the majority of time work within these bubbles only.
- Wherever possible, only senior staff or identified staff will work across the different areas of the school.

Staggered Times & New Entry Points: As highlighted previously we will be staggering start & finish times to support social distancing, minimise numbers around the building & keep everyone safe. This is something that we implemented successfully during the summer term & was really well supported by parents & children. We will be continuing with these staggered start & finish times & I ask that you follow the allocated times & use the entry points highlighted. It is vital that we avoid congregating on the school premises & road. As such, **only EYFS parents in the first instance will be allowed onto the playground.** This is to support important transition for them, but we ask that it is limited to **only one adult per child** [for the reasons previously outlined].

Staggered Times & Entry Points

Bubbles/Class	Where	Arrival Time	Finish Time
EYFS: Mrs Welch - Nur Miss Howells – Nur/Rec Miss McCauley - Rec	Large Double-Gated Playground Gate *One parent to walk their child along the sectioned part of the playground to the EYFS Building [left-side]	8:30-40am	2:45 pm N.B. This will alter after the first few weeks * Nursery children see below
KS1: Miss Jackson - Y1 Miss McCreavy –Y1-2 Miss O'Regan –Y2	Large Double-Gated Playground Gate *For Y1 children their Reception teacher from last year will take them over to their new class on the first day	8:45 –55am	3:05 pm
Lower KS2: Miss Kehoe - Y3 Miss Dobie - Y3-4 Miss Taylor- Y4	Main Entrance Gate	8:40 -50 am	2:55 pm
Upper KS2: Mrs Murphy - Y5 Miss Monan –Y5 Miss Ganley - Y6 Mr Clarke – Y6	Main Entrance Gate	9 -9:10 am	3:15 pm

- **All Nursery children to start & finish school at the individual time agreed before the summer holiday**
- If you have siblings, **in the first instance**, we will support the difficulty that this can provide & ask you to bring & collect them both together at the earliest time that one of your children starts or leaves. **[E.g. If you have a child in Rec & Y2 you bring them both at 8:30-40am]**
- We will use the Main Entrance Gate & also the Large Playground Gate to ease & support the flow & congestion around these points. In doing so no parents are allowed to park or stop, at all in front of this area. Please, I ask that now more than ever, that all parents see the safety implications & the reasoning

behind this & support us in ensuring that everyone is safe on the road & adheres to the legal parking requirements re: zig-zag & yellow lines.

- Staff across the school will be supporting the children as they enter into the school grounds. Wherever possible, the classteacher will welcome the children at the gate/on the playground & signpost pupils into school where they will be greeted by a member of staff who will settle them in by ensuring that they sanitise/wash their hands in the first instance. Please be aware that classteachers will be ensuring the safeguarding & settling in of all children in their class at this very busy time & will not be able to hold long individual conversations. However, every member of staff will endeavour to support you & your child in dealing with any issue or query, whatever it may be. Please bear with us in finding the best way to do this.
- At the end of the day the children will be walked to their entry point by a member of staff, so that they are safely collected.
- Finally, please be on time, as coming early or late will lead to an increased number of people gathering at busy points, which we need to avoid.

Uniform & Belongings: A reminder that school uniform is compulsory & is advised to be changed daily. This includes appropriate black school shoes as per usual – **not trainers**. It is particularly important that children have an appropriate, waterproof coat for outdoor play with them everyday, as they will be playing outdoors during break times, in all weather, with the exception of extreme downpours. On the day that your child has PE they will come into school in appropriate outdoor PE clothing, not their uniform & stay in this all-day. Again this is in-line with DfE guidance. Your classteacher & I will confirm PE days at the start of next week.

We need to restrict the belongings that children bring in from home to reduce the risk of transmission. Therefore, no large school bags or stationery should be brought in from home. The only items needed are: a coat, a lunchbox [if bringing their own dinner], a school book-bag & a water bottle. Please ensure that all items are labelled.

PE: I will be confirming the PE day for each class early next week. On the day that your child has PE they will be required to wear their kits & not the school uniform. They can come in plain black leggings & or jogging bottoms, to be worn over their School PE kit of black shorts & plain white t-shirt. Over this they can wear their school jumper or school cardigan. The children will be able to wear trainers only on the day they have PE.

Dinner Time & Breaks: School Lunch Provision will be in the form of a packed lunch during this half-term. This will be eaten by children in their classroom, with the exception of Early Years, who will access the dining hall in the first instance. As the half-term progresses we will be looking to put in place a rota-timetable for the older year groups eating in the dining hall. Break times for all children will be staggered, so that bubbles do not mix, with the playground being divided & sectioned off.

A reminder that all school meals are to be paid for promptly in-line with school policy. If you do have any outstanding dinner money arrears these need to be paid for & agreed with the office during the first week back, before additional school lunches are provided.

Attendance: A reminder that all school attendance is compulsory. The Government have made this quite clear & MCC will fine parents promptly for non-attendance of pupils & for holidays taken during term-time. As highlighted earlier punctuality & being-on-time is critical. It will be very difficult to take the children who are arriving into school late, when we are maintaining social distancing around the gate & streets. Please support us in ensuring that this is as smooth & timely as possible. If you have any issues with these two important matters then please do not hesitate to contact school.

A reminder that parents/visitors are not allowed to enter the school building unless via appointment. The Main Office will be open but we ask that you follow social distancing rules & come into the building only when it is safe to do so & there is no-one else in the office. As you will see the office has been amended to support this. This will be via the school-gate & the system in place operated by the Admin Team.

Hygiene: All pupils will be washing their hands & hand sanitising regularly throughout the school day. As with before the summer holidays, additional cleaning has been brought in to take place throughout the school day. This will ensure that communal areas, toilets, bins & classrooms are regularly checked & cleaned.

WRAP Club - Breakfast & After School Clubs: As mentioned before the holidays we are very close to launching our new WRAP Club [Before & After School Provision]. This has already been approved by the Governing Body & I look forward to informing you very soon of the start date & booking information for this.

As I am sure you can appreciate the government have only recently provided new guidance on how these need to operate from September. In light of this, there will be no breakfast club moving forward until the **WRAP Club** is fully implemented & further details of this are shared with you all. We will still be providing our enrichment clubs after school from September & writing to you about this at the start of the term.

Covid-19 Symptoms/Lock-down Information:

Symptoms of Coronavirus in children are: See latest information below taken from NHS/Public Health England

- ***A high temperature***
- ***A new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot, for more than an hour or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours.***
- ***A loss or change to sense of smell or taste – this means they cannot smell or taste anything or things smell or taste different to normal.***

Sore throats & blocked or runny noses are not symptoms of coronavirus.

If your child, or anyone in your household, shows symptoms of Covid-19 it is really important that you follow the Health Guidance & do not send them into school. You will be required to organise a test, with these now being more readily available for children & parents. Following this your child is to remain off school until the result is confirmed. When the result is confirmed please contact school immediately so that follow-up plans can be made. If your child shows symptoms of Covid-19 at school, you will be asked to collect your child immediately. Your child may have their temperature taken during the day if they feel or present as being unwell.

As always, all first aid procedures will be administered with care, love & personal, appropriate attention. Once again I apologise if this appears extreme or over-the-top, but it is the guidance we have been asked to follow to minimise transmission & ensure that our school can remain open. I like you recognise the real difficulties of distinguishing between a common cold, a virus & Covid-19 symptoms for children & staff alike. If in doubt, we are asked to follow the guidance & testing procedures outlined.

If there are confirmed positive tests for COVID-19 within our school community then we will follow the most up-to-date guidance available... This may mean that a class bubble or parts of the school will close for 14 days in-line with guidance. At all times we will support one-another & follow the experts & professional guidance from Public Health England.

We will continue to offer our warm welcome & accessibility for all & be available to provide support, but sadly it will be in a different way. What I do know is the strength of our relationships care for our children & one-another will ensure that our children will continue to flourish & grow when they return next week. Staff across the school have worked very carefully to adapt the curriculum & learning expectations for all year groups & children. This takes into account the gaps that we know there will be in learning, alongside vitally supporting the mental health & well-being of all children. As children settle back-in we will informally assess key skills in phonics, writing, maths & reading in particular. In doing so we can identify additional intervention needs & address these. Please rest assured that we will do this together & be unwavering in ensuring that our children have as smooth a transition as possible & are supported in reaching their potential.

Finally can I just reiterate how pleased & excited I am to welcome all of our children & families back to St Margaret Mary's next week. I would also like to welcome our new children & families who are joining us for the first time next week. They are warmly welcomed & I look forward to them starting their journey through St Margaret Mary's. I ask that we also remember in our prayers & thoughts, all of our children & families who left us in July. I wish them all the very best of luck & encourage them to keep in touch.

Although we will be working in a different way I know that our relationships will remain at the heart of all that we do & rooted in warmth & love as members of God's family. Once again I am so proud of how resilient our children, you as parents & all of the staff have been, in coping with the past six months that we have experienced. I look forward to hearing the laughter of our children & finding out about their new hobbies, talents & stories from lockdown & the summer.

Take care & God Bless!

Mr Sutton
Headteacher

