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Friday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2020

**St Margaret Mary's Letter:**

Dear Children, Parents and Carers,

**Welcome Back:** Welcome back to everyone, as we move towards the end of what has been a fantastic first week back at the start of this school year. I would like to begin by expressing my sincere thanks to the whole school community who have done a wonderful job in starting to adjust to the new routines that we find ourselves working in.

The children have been an absolute credit & it has been lovely to see them bounce into school & adjust so well to the changes that have been made. I am very proud of them all & it is wonderful to see them back. I would also like to say a special hello & welcome to our new children & families who have joined us in Reception & Nursery. I am sure that they will start to feel at home very soon.

**Uniform & PE Days:** I would like to say that the children look so smart in their uniform, as they have returned to school this week. Many thanks for your support with this. We do recognise that some have had difficulties sourcing parts of this & will continue to be patient & supportive, as always. A reminder that 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.

| Class                      | Day       |
|----------------------------|-----------|
| Y1 Miss Jackson            | Wednesday |
| Y1/2 Miss McCreavy         | Thursday  |
| Y2 Miss O'Regan            | Wednesday |
| Y3 Miss Kehoe              | Thursday  |
| Y3-4 Miss Dobie            | Monday    |
| Y4 Miss Taylor             | Monday    |
| Y5 Mrs Murphy & Miss Monan | Tuesday   |
| Y6 Miss Ganley & Mr Clarke | Tuesday   |

**Reading Books:** This week all reading books have been sent out with children in Years 1-6. Now more than ever we ask for your support in helping your child with their reading & establishing routines of listening to them or ensuring quiet reading-time. We ask that all children read daily at home & that the book comes into school each day. To fit with guidance reading books will be changed on a **Tuesday & Friday**. It is essential that all books are in school on these days.



**School Photographs:** On Wednesday **16<sup>th</sup> September** John Hunt Photographers will be coming into school to 'capture' our children at the start of the new school year. They will take individual and family photographs of our children and staff. A thorough risk assessment has been completed by the company & school in light of current ways of working. A reminder text will follow next week.

**'Meet the Teacher':** Normally we would be holding a meet the teacher event during the course of the first few weeks. Sadly we have been unable to accommodate this, but I am grateful to staff for their presence on the playground & perimeter fence at the start & end of the day. Hopefully you are reassured that your child has settled into school, but if you do require a further catch-up or discussion about anything please do not hesitate to make an appointment.

**Birthday of Mary, Our Blessed Mother:** On Tuesday we celebrated the Birthday of Mary & her devotion as a mother to Jesus & us all. Pope Francis asks for a very special devotion to Mary as the **'Undoer of Knots'**. We are reminded to ask her for help in our lives; when we need the 'knots, worries & problems' that we all face undoing. Now more than ever we need Our Lady's intercessions to provide strength & reassurance in our lives. Classes across the school made birthday cards, prepared prayer intercessions & produced pieces of artwork to celebrate the day.

**Celebration Mass:** Earlier today we celebrated Mass with Bishop John & many other schools from across the Diocese of Salford. This was live-streamed from Salford Cathedral & was watched in all classes throughout the school. It was a lovely opportunity for us all to come together at the start of the new academic year. In doing so we give thanks for being together again & look towards the year ahead. We ask for our Lord's help, his love & renewed strength & courage in the journey ahead for us all. That we may approach this year with positivity & commitment to making the most of our talents & gifts.

#### **CAFOD: 'The World We Want'**

Earlier this week all of the children across the school took part in a lovely assembly organised & led by CAFOD [Catholic Agency for Overseas Development]. In doing so we had the opportunity to reflect upon all that has happened over the last six months & the position that we find ourselves in; individually, as a community & as part of the wider world that we are a part of. It provided us all with food for thought & a great deal to reflect upon. We looked at the new way of life that we are currently experiencing together & how this is shared not only by one-another at St Margaret Mary's but also in countries around the world. The example of hand-washing & the importance of this, was highlighted with the experience of people living in countries such as Uganda compared to ours.

We reflected upon the call of Pope Francis who says: **"Today we have an opportunity to create something different"**. From this we focused upon; the world that we live in – Our Common Home, living in peace, ensuring that everyone is treated equally & fairly, caring for the environment & recycling, alongside many other themes. All of us made a pledge & a promise to do at least one thing this year to make our world a better place for everyone. Some wonderful displays have been created from this & I know that we will remind one-another to keep on-track with the promises that we have made.

**Adjusted Start & Finish Times:** A big thank-you for the support in ensuring that children arrive & are collected at the different times requested. Again this is to support social distancing, minimise numbers & movement around the building & keep everyone safe. After a very successful first week of trialling & transitioning, we are now going to alter these times slightly to ensure that all children are receiving their curriculum time requirements & so avoid disruption to classes & learning time, but importantly allow for staggered drop-off & collection times. As such we are going to retain the core teaching hours of teaching in all age-ranges & fit times around this. In doing so we have planned to ensure that parents with siblings in different year groups are not affected unduly. If this does apply to you we ask you to bring & collect them both together at the **earliest time** that one of your children starts or leaves. Please be aware that you may be asked to wait if this is not adhered to, to ensure pupil learning isn't affected. In addition to this if you are late it can cause disruption within classes.

**[E.g. If you have a child in Rec & Y2 you bring them both between 8:35-8:45am not later]**

## New Staggered Times & Entry Points:

| Bubbles/Class  | Where  | Arrival Time  | Finish Time  |
|--|--|---|--|
| <b>EYFS:</b><br>Mrs Welch - Nur<br>Miss Howells – Nur/Rec<br>Miss McCauley - Rec             | <b>Large Double-Gated<br/>           Playground Gate</b><br>*One parent to walk<br>their child along the<br>sectioned part of<br>the playground to<br>the EYFS Building<br>[left-side] | <b>8:35-8:45 am</b><br><br><b>Teaching starts 5 mins<br/>           later</b> | <b>2:50-3:00 pm</b><br><b>* Nursery children still<br/>           transitioned</b> |
| <b>KS1:</b><br>Miss Jackson - Y1<br>Miss McCreavy –Y1-2<br>Miss O’Regan –Y2                  | <b>Large Double-Gated<br/>           Playground Gate</b>   | <b>8:45 –8:55am</b><br><b>Teaching starts 5 mins<br/>           later</b>     | <b>3:00-3:10 pm</b>  |
| <b>Lower KS2:</b><br>Miss Kehoe - Y3<br>Miss Dobie - Y3-4<br>Miss Taylor- Y4                 | <b>Main Entrance Gate</b>  | <b>8:35 -8:45 am</b><br><b>Teaching starts 5 mins<br/>           later</b>    | <b>2:50-3:00 pm</b>  |
| <b>Upper KS2:</b><br>Mrs Murphy - Y5<br>Miss Monan –Y5<br>Miss Ganley - Y6<br>Mr Clarke – Y6 | <b>Main Entrance Gate</b>  | <b>8:45-8:55 am</b><br><b>Teaching starts 5 mins<br/>           later</b>     | <b>3:00-3:10 pm</b>  |

Hopefully you can see that with the new times we are still allowing for social distancing, ensuring that the children enter & leave the school calmly & also providing the opportunity for support to be provide by staff on-hand. A reminder to please be on time, as coming early or late will lead to an increased number of people gathering at busy points & disruption to lesson time, which we need to avoid.

Following suggestions we are also asking that parents line-up on the correct side of the gate & cross the road safely wherever possible, once they have collected their child [ren] to avoid congestion on the pavements. **As stated previously, we will not get everything right first-time round, & will need to continue to work together patiently, to make the very best of the situation we find ourselves in & ensure that it is as safe & calm as possible for our children, staff & you our families. Nevertheless, I think this week has been very successful & it is a credit to all of the school community. Thank-you!**

**School Lunch Provision:** A quick update to make you aware that we are working very hard to plan & timetable our normal hot-lunch provision. The Catering Team & staff around the school have done a fantastic job, of supporting the lunch provision taking place in classes for the majority of children. This has included hot sandwiches, salads etc... as well as packed lunches. I will update you further on this next week once the system has been put in place.

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 please contact the School Office to arrange payment of these.

### **Covid-19 Symptoms/Lock-down Information:**

Symptoms of Coronavirus in children are **any** of the following: 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. [Usually a dry cough & not a productive/mucus-based one]
- 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.

**Partial School Closures:** I am sure that you are all aware, through the national & local press, of school closures & classes being asked to stay at home due to COVID-19 infections. Sadly, this is something that no-one school, individual or family will be exempt from as we move forward. It is really important that we are vigilant & that we follow the correct procedures. 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. 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. At all times we will support one-another & follow the experts & professional guidance from Public Health England so that our school can remain open. Again, I recognise the real difficulties of distinguishing between a common cold, a virus & Covid-19 symptoms for children & staff alike, but if in doubt, we are asked to follow the guidance & testing procedures outlined. **Nevertheless, I ask that as a school community we are not afraid of what could happen, but reassured & positive in the here & now & the benefits of our school being filled with laughter & with learning. Please rest assured that we will deal with all situations together & in a calm, caring & supportive manner.**

**Welcome & Goodbyes:** I would like to warmly welcome to the staff team Miss Ledward, who will be supporting teaching & learning in Key Stage One & Miss Parker, who is re-joining our school next week. We also welcome Mrs Tattersall to our School Cleaning Team. We are really pleased to have them as part of the St Margaret Mary's Family & they have already settled in.

It is with real sadness that towards the end of the summer holiday we had to say goodbye to two members of staff. Mrs Conway, our lunch-time organiser & Mr Heap part of our teaching & learning team. Mrs Conway retired after many years of supporting & caring for children at lunch & break-times. I would like to thank her for her commitment to the school & the children who she looked after. We wish her all the very best in her well-deserved time with her family.

Mr Heap, has sadly left the staff team after a number of years working as a teaching assistant. I would like to thank him for his professionalism, care & the warm relationships that he established with all children. This included the children who journeyed through KS1, as well as the many children who he supported & led in after-school clubs & sporting events. We wish Mr Heap all the very best in his new career & thank him for the difference that he made. Thanks again Mrs Conway & Mr Heap – good luck!

Once again I would like to thank everyone for their efforts in ensuring that our return to school this week has been a happy & a successful one. I wish you all a lovely weekend & look forward to seeing you all next week.

Take care & God Bless!

Mr Sutton  
Headteacher

