



ST. HELEN'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL
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 HEADTEACHER: MRS C. S. LEWIS BSC (HONS) / PGCE / QTS



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'LET US CONSIDER HOW WE MAY SPUR ONE ANOTHER ON TOWARD LOVE AND GOOD DEEDS.' HEBREWS 10:24

Friday 29th May 2020

Dear parents and carers,

Update on the wider opening of school

Thank you for your patience while we waited for further information on the wider opening of schools. The government has now announced that its '5 Key Tests' have been met and it is therefore safe for schools to reopen to some year groups from June 1st depending on schools' capacity to do so.

You may feel differently about this and I want to reassure you that we won't be pressuring parents to send their children to school – you know what's best for your child's health and wellbeing. There are no attendance expectations and no fines will be issued at this time. We will of course continue with our remote Home Learning provision for all children not returning to school at this time.

Further to the letter you will have received from the Chair of the Board of Directors, the CEO and Trust Headteachers on Friday 22nd May, I can now announce that in addition to the continuing childcare provision for Key Workers, **St. Helen's will be reopening to Reception class only and not to Year 1 or Year 6.** This decision has been made based on the school's capacity regarding space and available staff and in compliance with the DCC Risk Assessment and government guidance on infection control and social distancing measures. Every possible scenario has been explored to enable the school to reopen more widely to other year groups, such as the use of alternative venues, however statutory Health and Safety and Safeguarding regulations cannot be assured; neither is there sufficient staff capacity to achieve this.

Further to the letter sent to all parents and carers by the Alumnis Board of Directors earlier this afternoon, the Alumnis Trust made the decision to adhere to the Department for Education's guidance on prioritising childcare provision for the children of Key Workers and vulnerable children and have then planned for reopening to additional year groups in the DfE's recommended order i.e. the youngest children first. After analysis of the school's Risk Assessment and capacity of the school's space and available staff, the Board has approved the decision to reopen to Reception class only at this time. Childcare provision for Key Worker children will continue on Monday 1st June and operate Monday - Friday however **provision for Reception class will begin on Thursday 4th June. Reception provision will not be open on Wednesdays.**

Over the past few weeks detailed plans have been created to make sure we can keep children and staff as safe as possible. Precautions will include:

- Limiting group sizes into 'bubbles';



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- Zoning the school to prevent cross contamination;
- Rearranging the classrooms to enable social distancing;
- Decluttering to ensure a clean environment;
- Developing a one-way system for dropping off and picking up;
- Putting up signage about social distancing and infection control measures;
- Maintaining consistent bubbles of children with consistent staff dedicated to each bubble;
- Staggering break times, lunchtimes, pick-up and drop-off times;
- Increased cleaning;
- Ensuring children and staff with coronavirus symptoms stay at home;
- Please see further information below.

It is very important that you only send your child to school if they are well. If your child, or anyone in your household is showing symptoms of coronavirus, please stay at home. Also if your child is **clinically extremely vulnerable**, or living with someone who is in this group, they should not come back to school. If your child is **clinically vulnerable** (but not clinically extremely vulnerable), you should follow medical advice to decide if they should come back to school. Please refer to the [government guidance](#) for exact details.

I would like to thank you for your messages of support over the past few months. I hope that by working in partnership, we can gradually reopen our school in a safe and sustainable manner. The health, safety and wellbeing of all will always be our utmost priority to protect our school community. If you have any questions, please contact me via the school number or admin email address.

Please take care and stay safe.

Kind regards,



Headteacher

St. Helen's Church of England School

Further information regarding school re-opening measures:

- Class sizes will be no more than 15 children in a room at any one time and may be fewer depending on room capacity.
- Children will be taught in 'bubble groups' to ensure that they consistently remain with the same peer group with the same adults assigned to them - bubbles will not be 'burst' except in the case of an emergency.
- Children will not necessarily be taught by their own class teacher/TA.
- Children will not necessarily be taught in their usual classrooms.
- The class based provision will look and feel different than usual and resources will be pared back.
- Each child will have their own individualised pack of learning resources - no items are to be brought in from home for either Reception children or Key Worker children.
- Staggered drop off and pick up times will be in operation - Start 09:00 and finish 15:15 for Reception and Start 08:45 and finish 15:30 for Key Worker childcare.
- A reduced school time table will be in operation to enable periods of closure for cleaning and time for staff to plan for both provision in school and home school learning - Reception provision will not be open on Wednesdays. Key Worker childcare provision will be open Monday - Friday
- The curriculum provided for children will be adapted to focus on areas such as physical activity, core skills in English and Maths, PSHE and Collective Worship.

- Health and safety requirements will include the increased requirement for frequent hand washing at set points throughout the day. Lidded pedal bins will be used for tissues and will be emptied regularly throughout the day. Hand sanitiser will be available in all classrooms and on entry to the school premises.
- Movement by children and adults will be restricted around the school, with groups remaining in their bubbles.
- We will limit the number of children who can use the toilet facilities at one time - Reception children and Key Worker children will use different toilet facilities.
- Attendance - Government guidance is that parents are strongly encouraged to allow their children to attend school where provision is available, but will not face sanctions, such as fines, if they continue to choose to educate their children at home. Normal attendance reporting will continue in order to maintain safeguarding and health and safety requirements. Parents have the choice whether they send their children into school or not and their decision will be respected.
- Attendance by children in Early Years at more than one provider is not permitted and/or for short periods of a day are not ideal as this would mean that there is more contact with different people.
- Uniform - children must come to school in clean fresh clothes each day to reduce the risk of the spread of infection but this does not have to be school uniform. Children can wear school uniform if this is easier to launder frequently, their own clothes or a mixture of both.
- Parents will not be allowed to enter school premises or gather at the school gates. Strict social distancing will need to be adhered to at drop off and pick up times and only one parent will be allowed to accompany the child to school.
- Social distancing guidance will be observed in and around school premises where possible.
- Children will not be permitted to bring any objects into school from home with the exception of coats, water bottles and lunch boxes, if they are having a packed lunch.
- There will be no breakfast or after school provision for the rest of the term.
- Play times and lunchtimes will be staggered and in different areas to ensure bubbles do not mix or cross.
- The use of some play equipment will not be permitted, e.g. balls. Play equipment such as hula hoops, skipping ropes and chalk will be provided and regularly cleaned between uses.
- Children will eat in different areas of the school in order to maintain separation at lunchtime.
- School lunches are highly encouraged to prevent items being brought into school. School lunches will be provided in disposable containers and an alternative school dinner menu will be produced to cater for those requiring a school lunch.
- Staff will **not** be required to wear PPE unless specifically risk assessed, administering first aid or personal care, supervising a child who is spitting, vomiting or displaying symptoms of coronavirus as per the government guidance recommended for schools.
- Additional and regular cleaning routines will be implemented throughout the day in each individual bubble. A strict checklist of cleaning procedures will be adhered to. This will be recorded and monitored daily.
- Each school will have a designated isolation area should a child or member of staff become unwell. Any children or staff displaying symptoms will be sent home and Public Health advice will be followed.
- Collective Worship will still remain key areas of the curriculum and will be delivered within individual 'bubble groups'.
- School office functions will be pared back and the admin team will sometimes undertake their work from home, this will not change parent's ability to communicate with the school.

Please also refer to further government guidance for educational settings below:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/886276/COVID19_guidance_education_poster.pdf

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>

A few pictures of school with some social distancing measures already in place. This is a work in progress.

