



The Cathedral School of St Mary

Head Teacher: Mr M Dyson B.Ed

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Email the.cathedral.school@plymouth.gov.uk

<https://cathedral-school.eschools.co.uk>

19th May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

It seems like an eternity since we were last together. I hope you are all well and safe and still in good spirits. This letter is to outline the next steps we will take as a school and to share as much information with you all as we possibly can. As you will no doubt have seen in the news, schools are being encouraged to open for children in Foundation, Year 1 and Year 6, as well as opening for vulnerable children and children of Key Workers. We will be opening for these groups and you will have been contacted by the school as we need to make sure we have the right provisions in place for the number of children we are expecting to be in.

The 'Bubbles'

The government is encouraging schools to work in specific groups and are referring to these as 'bubbles'. An adult will be working with the same children throughout the day and children's start times, break times, lunchtimes and end of day times will be staggered to minimise the risk of transmission between and across groups. A bubble will have no more than 8 children in as we can not physically fit more than this in a classroom at a time without compromising the 2m safe, social distancing rule.

Start and End times and procedures

There will **not** be breakfast club or after school club provisions. This is because of the reasons stated above. It would be impossible to keep children safely distanced, and we would be unable to staff this with each child's 'bubble' adult. Start times and end times will be as follows:

	Start Time	End Time
Key Workers and Vulnerable	08:30	15:15
Year 6	08:40	15:05
Year 1	08:50	14:55
Foundation	09:00	14:45

It is imperative that you are on time for this to work.

At the start of each day, we ask you to come into the school grounds keeping to the left as you approach the gate and enter the playground. Here you will snake around the playground to the bike shed, across the back wall, down the side wall and back towards the main school. This will create a 'one-way' system and will avoid any contact with others. Along the wall, there will be markers 2 metres apart for you to stand and wait. A member of staff will then invite you to say goodbye to your child as they then enter the school building, wash their hands, and make their way up to their classroom. You will then leave out of the left-hand side of the gate as you exit (this would be the right-hand side as you entered the school grounds).

At the end of the school day, we ask for you to do the same as the morning. The class will then be brought onto the playground and lined up 2 metres apart and the adult will then send your child to you and you can leave together. Only one parent must attend the school site to drop-off and collect their child. We ask in advance that parents do not congregate for conversations.

Safety in school

Love

Aspiration

Teamwork

Resilience

Honesty

Courage



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Your child's safety is paramount. Inside the school, we will be opening all of our doors to minimise the amount of times surfaces are being touched. We will be operating a one-way system in school which everyone will adhere to. Children may only go UP the staircase by the office and toilet areas, and come DOWN the stairs by the Foundation classroom. This will be shared with children as they arrive on the playground on the first day. If your child has school dinners, or would like to have school dinners, this will be provided in the normal way by CaterEd.

Children may bring their own packed lunch but these will be stored on their own workstations throughout the day. We are asking that children do not bring anything else in from home. Pencils and pens will be provided and will be stored on each child's workstation to avoid any transmission.

We will go through all of the new safety rules with the children on the first day back. This will include the fire drill where children will need to evacuate the building whilst still adhering to the social distancing rules.

Uniform

We will not be expecting uniform to be worn. Children may wear their own clothes. The reason for this is children should be wearing clean clothes each day. At the end of the school day, it would be good practice for your child to strip their clothes off, have a shower and put clean clothes on. The clothes they wore to school then need to be washed immediately.

Free School Meals

Some parents have required support during this uncertain time. People will have been furloughed, or even lost their jobs. If you are worried about your finances, you may well qualify for Free School Meals. Please contact the office if you would like further information about this. Those families who are currently in receipt of Free School Meals but their child is not returning to school will still be provided with a weekly hamper if they would like one. You must inform the school by the previous Wednesday so Sandra is able to order the right amount of food.

Behaviour

We are currently reviewing our behaviour policy in-line with the reopening of schools. In a primary school you will experience behaviours that require consequences. This is completely normal as we teach children from 4 years old the differences between right and wrong, and how to manage their emotions and interactions. Some behaviours before Covid-19 would have warranted consequences and maybe conversations with parents. However, with the heightened risks and anxieties that everyone will have, these behaviours can not and will not be tolerated in school under any circumstances. Behaviours such as spitting (including blowing raspberries), screaming in people's faces close up, physical behaviours such as hitting, kicking and biting, leaving a classroom without adult authorisation are behaviours that will inevitably put adults and other children at unnecessary risk. If your child does pose such a risk and we do not feel they are safe, or their behaviour puts staff or children at risk, we will ask you to come and collect your child from school immediately. We will then discuss how we can accommodate your child in school so they are safe, and other people in the building are also safe.

Learning

If your child is not in school, learning will still be in place remotely as it has been since we started lockdown. It may not be online at the same times each day. For example, Miss Horwood will be teaching the children she has in school, and will upload the lessons and learning that she does with her class as and when she can that day. Please keep checking on Google classrooms, Dojo and the school website for this.

Contacting the school/visitors

Parents will not be allowed to enter the school building under any circumstances. If you would like to speak with a member of staff, you may request to do so on the playground at the end of a school day from a safe distance but the best option would be through e-mail, dojo or phone conversation.

There may be times where visitors will be on site. They will be given clear instructions about our protocols and policies and surfaces such as door handles etc. that they touch will be wiped down and cleaned.

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Final note from me

It goes without saying that this is unusual for us all. There is great anxiety about June 1st, for parents and for staff. It is YOUR choice to send your child in. There will be no penalty imposed if your child does not return and their learning will not be affected as we will ensure they get a quality education which will be carefully planned for when they do return. Please do not feel any guilt or worry that other children are going back but you are deciding to keep your child at home. Your child is your whole world and nothing other than their safety and wellbeing matters. As outlined in this letter, we will do EVERYTHING in our powers to keep your child safe whilst in our care. With the anxieties though, there is great hope. These are baby steps and if it all goes to plan, we will hopefully see more children in school as the weeks go by.

I will be in touch as and when more information needs to be shared. Please continue to be vigilant and follow the guidelines from the government. As positive as some of the data is, we are still not out of the woods and we must be cautious in everything we do. I must stress that this is the likely plan and it could well change as a result of government, trust policy or other local circumstances..

On behalf of the staff team, we miss you all so much and look forward to seeing some of you again soon.

Take care and God bless.

Mr M Dyson



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