



# School Newsletter

With Christ we live, we love, we learn and we grow

16.06.20

Dear Parents/ Carers,

## Wider reopening of school

We are reopening school more widely from next Monday 22 June. However, we have altered our plans for the reopening slightly. The period of the staggered start will be shorter and the Y6 class will be in for the last week of term in place of children from Year 1.

In preparation for a restart immediately after the half-term break, we carried out a detailed risk assessment. We followed DfE guidelines in giving priority to critical worker / vulnerable children and the youngest children first. In doing so, we decided to open for the group of critical workers' / vulnerable children, Nursery children, Reception children and Y1 children. Our assessment indicated that we could not accommodate the Y6 class as well. We continue to proceed on this basis.

However, at the time of the risk assessment we were hopeful that we could also accommodate Year 6 at some point, if the lifting of restrictions permitted it. Last week, the Government announced that it is no longer able to bring all primary year groups back before the end of summer term.

We feel that, although the Year 6 class comes fourth in the order of priority for reopening, it is essential that our children, in that year group, are given the opportunity to have some time together before they leave St Mary's.

As you will appreciate, these children are about to undertake a huge step in their learning journey. They are leaving their relatively small primary school for a much larger high school - *big fish in a little pond, to little fish in a big pond* - as the cliché goes. Many will be travelling to and from school without their parents. Instead of one teacher for all subjects, they will move around different classrooms for different subjects with different teachers and so on and so forth. It is a big adjustment to make, as we all know from our own experiences of school.

In normal circumstances throughout the summer term, we would have done lots of preparatory work to help the children make this step up to high school. We feel that we owe it to the children to use our experience to answer any questions, and to allay any concerns that they may have. The stated vision of our school is, **'From their first day to their last at St Mary's, we support our children on a journey of learning and faith.'** We do not feel that we would be fulfilling that aim if we did not give the Y6 children the opportunity to experience that 'last' day on Friday July 17 instead of Friday 20 March.

In order to accommodate the Year 6 children, we need to ask the next oldest year group, Year 1, to make way for them for one week at the end of term. I apologise to Year 1 parents for any inconvenience that this may cause but I hope you understand the reasoning behind it. By bringing the Y1 group back from Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> June, these children will have three full weeks in school.

### Attendance Dates

Group	Start and end date for summer term attendance
Critical worker/ vulnerable children	22 June - 17 July
Nursery	23 June - 17 July
Reception	24 June – 17 July
Year 1	22 June - 10 July
Year 6	13 July – 17 July

Yesterday, Mrs Wilson sent out a survey to ascertain numbers of children attending in each of the groups so that we could allocate children to their particular bubbles. Thank you all for your prompt responses; we are just awaiting one or two more. We aim to provide you with details of your child's bubble tomorrow alongside more details of the procedures involved for next week.

### Staggered start

We will have a staggered start over three days so that all eligible groups will be in school by Wednesday. This is a shorter period than originally planned because we feel we are more ready now than we would have been on June 2<sup>nd</sup>. We still want to proceed with caution and learn lessons as we take this approach.

Monday 22 June	Critical Worker / Vulnerable Children and Year 1 start
Tuesday 23 June	As above plus Nursery class
Wednesday 24 June	As above plus Reception Class

### Bubbles

Yesterday, Mrs Wilson sent out a survey to ascertain numbers of children attending in each of the groups so that we could allocate children to their particular bubbles. Thank you all for your prompt responses; we are just awaiting one or two more. We aim to provide you with details of your child's bubble tomorrow.

### Home Learning - What is going to happen with the classes not attending school?

We have a number of teachers who will not be teaching face-to-face in school. They will help to manage the learning of the classes not in school. However, they will be managing the learning of children not necessarily in their classes. Inevitably and unfortunately, this will mean a reduced level of home learning provision over the next few weeks – but we will do the best we can.

In order to prepare for next week's reopening, the teachers will need to liaise with one another to plan and deliver the learning for both the children at school and those at home. This means that on Thursday and Friday this week, the teachers will not be setting any additional home learning. If you would like to complete activities that have already been allocated, please feel free to do so. Please note that on Thursday, Friday or at the weekend this week, the teachers will not be able to mark this work. Thank you for your continued support.

Best wishes,  
Patrick Smyth  
Headteacher