Monday 18th May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you for patience as you await further information regarding school reopening.

The government says the reopening of school to children in YR, Y1 and Y6 will be dependent on a number of conditions being met but ultimately the decision to allow your child to return or not rests with you. So hopefully the following detailed information will guide your decision making. Your decision will be personal to you and your family and NO FINES WILL BE ISSUED TO PARENTS WHO CHOOSE TO KEEP THEIR CHILD AT HOME and we will support your decision whatever that may be.

* I cannot guarantee that other children will not touch or breath, cough or sneeze on your child
* I cannot guarantee that there will not be a person in school who has Coronavirus
* I cannot guarantee that our setting will be ‘Covid-Secure’ as that is impossible to achieve
* I cannot guarantee that your child will not transmit Coronavirus to you or their siblings
* I cannot guarantee that social distancing will be in place throughout the day, it is hard for all children to stay away from each other but impossible for the younger ones.
* School will not feel ‘normal’ - children will be in small groups and they will remain with the same group all day.
* Break and lunchtime will be staggered so the groups do not meet.
* Most children will not be with their usual class teacher or teaching assistants
* Groups of children will be in different classrooms and all soft furnishings will be removed and only essential resources will be available to enable additional cleaning routines to be established.
* Start and finish times will be staggered with 15 minutes between each group arriving/leaving
* The school start and finish times will therefore vary for different groups – some will arrive later and some will go home earlier than usual
* Only one parent will be allowed to collect/drop off and will not be allowed to wait around
* We will not be able to provide breakfast and afterschool club as we will need to keep groups of children apart
* Children will have their own desk and will have to remain in the same seat throughout the week.
* Children requiring first aid will be tended to by staff wearing a mask and gloves and sadly we will not be able to comfort children with a cuddle if they are upset
* Groups will only begin to return to school a few at a time starting with YR on Tuesday 2nd June and then Y1 at a later date
* Children in Y6 will only be offered a short time in school before the end of term to complete transition activities. It is highly unlikely that they will be able to visit their high schools before September. Unfortunately Y6 will not be able to come together for a leavers’ assembly, disco or party although we will endeavour to arrange a way to mark the end of their primary education in September.
* Children will only be in school Monday to Thursday so that deep cleaning can be undertaken before the next group of children use the classrooms the week after and to allow staff to continue to provide a home learning programme.
* Not all groups will be in school every week as we do not have enough classrooms
* Staff may not be able to adhere to the planned curriculum for your child’s age group
* We will still need to provide childcare for the children of key workers – those children will need to remain in separate groups so as not to come into contact with children in other groups.
* Home learning will continue to be provided for children to complete at home
* The free school meal voucher system will still provide vouchers for parents who chose to keep their children at home. Children attending school in YR and Y1 will be provided with a free school meal but will not receive vouchers.

None of the above fits with our philosophy as a caring, Catholic school but is necessary in order to follow the government guidance and make school as safe as we can make it. Our staff chose to work with children because they care not only about children’s academic development but also about their emotional well-being. It will not be easy for any of us to adhere to this new way of working but it will be necessary in order to keep children and staff safe.

I understand that home educating your child is difficult and at times you will need a break and understandably there will be days when you or your child can’t face completing learning tasks. That is fine – your child’s emotional well-being is incredibly important and we can all catch up with learning when it is safe for all children to return to school even if that means repeating parts of the curriculum.

I hope that I have given you enough information to allow you to make an informed decision on what is right for you and your family. I sincerely wish school was safe enough to open to all children but sadly, the truth is, that currently this is not the case at the moment and I speak to you not just as a head teacher, but as a parent too.

It is now necessary to gauge your opinions and to ask whether you intend to send your child back to school in June or July if the government ask us to open to more children. Please click on the link or QR code at the end of this letter or **email** school with your opinions as follows and with any questions to enquiries@saintoswalds.wigan.sch.uk

Child’s name: Year Group:

I wish to send my child back to school if school opens before the summer holidays.

or

I do not wish to send my child back to school if school opens before the summer holiday.

Once I have an idea of how many of you intend to send your children back to school I will write again with clearer information of what we can offer in terms of start dates, start and finish times and how much time in school we can provide.

If you are a key worker and have not yet sent your child to school and may require a place, please let me know. The Local Authority are expected to provide further guidance around key worker criteria in the next few days.

Thank you for your support at this difficult time.

Please stay safe and take care,

Mrs J Hassan Headteacher

Mrs L Morgan- Hillam Deputy Headteacher

Mr C Goulding Assistant Headteacher

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=aWzlPdolmUiJCLK7g87zySQvizG_WFpAhTf5RTEkvztUME5YR09aUVZITVNNN0dSOEpNSVNISVNFRS4u>

