10 August 2020

**Summary**

**Week Beginning 24 August 2020:**

**Commencing Tuesday 1 September 2020**

**Surnames beginning A-L (AM session)**

P3 & 5 – 08:45-11:15

P2, 4 & 6 – 09:00-11:30am

**All Pupils:**

P3, 5 & 7 – 08:45-13:45

P2, 4 & 6 – 09:00-14:00

**P1 Induction programme will be issued separately in the coming days**

**Surnames beginning M-Z (PM session)**

P3 & 5 – 12:15-14:45

P2, 4 & 6 – 12:30-15:00

**All P7 children should attend for the full day, 08:45-13:45pm during this week.**

Dear Parents,

You will have no doubt heard the Education Minister’s statement confirming that all children will return to school full time from week beginning 31 August 2020.

We are delighted to hear that a full return is now possible and are in the process of putting additional measures in place to ensure the safety of everyone within the school grounds and building.

The main points of guidance currently are:

 • All adults must observe 2m social distancing between all other adults and children;

 • 2m markers will be placed in corridors throughout the school and around the teacher within every classroom.

 • Children do not need to adhere to 1m social distancing, but should maintain as much distance as possible;

 • Classes should be set up making full use of all available space.

 • Classes will be timetabled for access to allocated zones in the school playground in order to reduce the number of children in each space at any given time.

 • Staggered start and finish times will be implemented;

 • Primary 1 (after induction period), 3, 5 & 7 classes will attend from 8.45-1.45 daily;

 • Primary 2, 4 & 6 classes will attend between 9.00-2pm daily;

 • Child MUST arrive and be collected promptly. No access to the school outside of the allocated times will be permitted.

 • All children will be placed in protective ‘bubbles’, which will remain constant during their time at school;

 • Adults and children cannot move between classes;

 • Adults and children will only leave classrooms at designated times (bathroom breaks, timetabled access to playgrounds etc)

 • Lunches will be served in classrooms as whole school access to the dining hall will not be possible;

 • Usual supervision arrangements at lunchtime will not be possible and teachers will remain with their class

 • In order to facilitate teacher breaks school will finish earlier each day (as outlined above)

 • Shared facilities will not be used until further notice (ICT suite, Library, swimming lessons, cloakrooms etc.

 • Visits to the school from outside sources will be restricted and tightly managed in order to allow better infection control;

 • Any external agencies will only be admitted if PPE is used

 • Peripatetic teachers will be required to use PPE

 • No unscheduled visits will be allowed

 • Parents will not be able to enter the school playground or building without an appointment

 • Anyone experiencing symptoms of Covid-19, ie. a new continuous cough, high temperature or loss of taste or smell, will be asked to stay at home and isolate for a 10-day period;

 • Temperature checks will be carried out on all staff, pupils and visitors entering the school. These will be carried out at the point of entry to school (main entrance gate) and will be carried out by Mr McNamee and Mrs McCotter with use of electronic, non-contact thermometers. No data will be stored.

 • If your child is sick, they should stay at home. Should your child feel sick in school they will be sent home.

 • If your child develops a temperature or complains they are warm, they will be sent home immediately.  Temperature may be taken by a member of staff.

 • Please be advised that if someone vomits in a classroom, it may be necessary to send all the children home in order to have the room deep cleaned.

 • Additional hygiene routines will be implemented;

 • Non-touch hand sanitisers available at all school entrances

 • Non-touch hand sanitisers in all classrooms

 • Regular, scheduled hand cleaning for all

 • All staff will be issued with PPE equipment including; visors, face coverings, aprons and gloves. Children should be prepared in advance of coming to school that their teacher/assistant may wear some or all of this PPE.

 • Catch it, bin it, kill it message reinforced

 • Children encouraged to cough/sneeze into handkerchiefs or elbow fold

**DROP OFF    One-way system (enter by pedestrian gate and exit by vehicle gate).**

Each year group will be allocated a specific time period to enter the school grounds through the pedestrian gate, and then a designated doorway to enter the building.   On the pavement outside are 2m markings, we ask you to abide by these markings.  If you can, please leave your child at the gate. Your child will walk to their sanitising station at their specific entry point.   Staff will be on hand to help. If your child needs a little more reassurance you may accompany them through the gate into the playground.   In this case you MUST wait until all children have entered the school before leaving by the pedestrian gate. Again, please socially distance in the playground as you wait.

Children will be supervised by staff to ensure their hands are sanitised before entering the building. Temperatures will be taken as they enter the playground.

Children who are not able to settle, or become distressed coming into school, will have to return home.  If you are late, you must wait until all children have entered the school (after 9.30).

**PICK UP    One-way system (enter by pedestrian gate and exit by vehicle gate).**

The children will be supervised sanitising their hands on leaving their classroom.

Each year group will have a specific exit allocated and a scheduled time for leaving the school grounds.

At home time the teachers will escort the children to the playground.  Parents may wait for their child within the car park at a social distancing of 2m. Everyone will leave on foot through the vehicle gates.   If you wish your child/ren to meet you outside, they will leave via the vehicle gates. It is vital that you make sure your child knows they should not walk with their friend and they should “Be Smart, Stay Apart.”

If you are late at pick up time your child will be brought into the foyer until you arrive.  Please be on time.

We hope to be able to offer an additional point of entry before the return to school on Monday 24 August 2020, and will advise as soon as this is possible. We also ask that, where possible, children walk to school unaccompanied. If a parent must accompany children, then we ask that you park at the bottom of Mica Drive or walk to school as the school car park will be closed to all traffic between 8.30 and 9.30am, and between 1.30 and 2.30 each day. This is to allow for one-way pedestrian exit through the school car park and vehicle gates.

**BEHAVIOUR**

We are fully aware that these are challenging times for everyone. We know that many children will have been with you and only you for a significant amount of time. Please try to allow your child time away from you, perhaps with a family member, to help transition them for the return to school.

Compliance with our positive behaviour policy and its addendum, is essential. For the safety of everyone, if child does not follow the rules or defies what they are asked to do, they will be sent home immediately. A child who bites, spits, scrabs etc will be excluded for at least 1 day.

We will be discouraging children from holding hands, hugging etc. Staff must continue to social distance from both adults and children. Please explain to your child(ren) that they must socially distance from the staff, this will be difficult especially with the little ones but is necessary to keep the staff safe too.

We ask that all children wear their school uniform, as normal. Children must not bring anything from home to school, except for a disposable bottle of water and any necessary snack and lunch in disposable wrappings in a plastic bag. All items brought to school must be disposed of in the classroom bin at the end of each day. Nothing will be sent home with your child.

The return to school will come as a relief to many, but we are conscious that it may be a difficult transition for students who have been away from school since mid-March. In order to ease the transition for pupils we plan to offer half-day classes for all pupils P1-6 during the week commencing 24 August 2020. This week will be spent discussing recent issues and the impact of Covid-19 on each child. A resource pack has been uploaded to the school website which you may like to discuss with your child to help them prepare for the return to school.

Every child will have a unique experience of the period of lockdown and the many issues which arise will be explored in order to allow for a more ‘normal’ school experience when full time return is possible from Tuesday 1 September 2020. In order to divide classes for the purpose of half day sessions we have allocated all pupils:

**whose surname begins with letters A-L to the AM session**

**P3 & 5 – 8:45-11:15am**

**P2, 4 & 6 – 9:00-11:30am**

**whose surname begins with letters M-Z to the PM session**

**P3 & 5 – 12:15-2:45pm**

**P2, 4 & 6 – 12:30-3pm**

All P7 children should attend for the full day, 8:45-1:45pm during this week.

The uncertainty of the last few months has impacted significantly on everyone associated with St Paul’s and I would like to thank you all for your continued understanding during this period. Hopefully these plans will mark a new beginning in your child’s educational journey and with a partnership approach to onwards learning we can quickly rebuild confidence and enable every child to reach their fullest potential throughout this year.

I look forward to seeing everyone safely returned to St Paul’s in the coming weeks.

Yours faithfully,

Sean McNamee

PRINCIPAL