



St Mary's RC Primary School

Guidance for Parents for September 2021

Term Dates

- All pupils in Y1-6 will return to school on **Tuesday 7th September 2021**.
- All pupils in Reception Class will return to school on Monday 13th September 2020, following a two day 'transition' period planned between 7th – 10th September.

Changes to the 2020/21 School Year

- The school will be open to pupils from 8:40am to 3:20pm Monday to Friday.
- There will no longer be a 'staggered' start to the school day however classes will be dismissed on a revised staggered basis to limit the number of adults arriving at the school gates at the end of the day.
- We will await further guidance and clarification with regards class 'bubbles'. We know that, at present, schools will no longer have a legal duty to instruct pupils or staff to isolate due to close contact with a Covid-positive case in school however we will continue to have a certain arrangements in place to ensure cleanliness, good hygiene and to limit the spread of infection among pupils, staff and our wider community.
- Swimming lessons will resume in Years 4 and 5 in the Autumn Term.
- We hope to be able to provide a wider array of 'extra-curricular' opportunities for pupils – such as school trips – from the Autumn Term.
- We will be surveying parents upon our return with regards after-school clubs which we hope will resume in the Autumn Term.

Routines at the Start and End of the School Day

- Gates will open to pupils at 8:40am and will close at 8:55am.
- Registration of pupils is at 8:55am; pupils arriving after this time will be marked as 'late'.
- Pupils in Y1 to 6 may arrive by either Gate B or C. Parents/carers will continue to handover pupils at the school gate (there will be a slightly different transition arrangement for new starters who we ask to use Gate C in the first instance due to its proximity to the Reception classroom).
- We will continue to advise the wearing of a face covering at the school gates and adherence to present social distancing guidance.
- Pupils will be dismissed from school on a staggered basis. Pupils will continue to be dismissed at an assigned gate.
- Sibling groups will be dismissed together to prevent parents from having to make multiple trips to/from school. Siblings will be dismissed at earliest time slot (ie. Older siblings will be dismissed with their youngest sibling's class).
- Where possible, pupils will access their classroom via a class door; teachers will supervise these doors between 8:40am and 8:55am. Please talk to your child about the entrance point they are to use, so they know where to go when they pass through the gates.
- There will still be certain restrictions as to the access of the school site throughout the day.
- Parents are discouraged from congregating before/after drop-offs/pick-ups so that the gates do not become overcrowded. As pupils are dismissed, we would ask parents/carers to vacate the vicinity of the school site quickly and safely to ease congestion and support social distancing routines.
- Pupils and other children brought to the school gate must be kept under close supervision at all times (holding hands or in touching distance). Children should not be allowed to play around the school gates and are not permitted to climb the walls/fences etc which surround the school site.
- The member of staff on the gate will welcome your child(ren) at a safe distance of 2m. Should your child(ren) become distressed, we would ask you to remove your child to a safe location and give them the opportunity to calm down. Staff will not be able to escort your child into school during drop-off/pick-up times.
- Parents should still direct communication through the school office via phone or email, or by arranged appointment.
- Parents who are late to drop-off/pick-up their child will be asked to wait at the Main Gate and phone the office; a member of staff will then come to the gate to collect the pupil. Parents must not try to access the Main Office without prior arrangement. Late parents must not access the staff car park.
- **This information must be shared in full with all adults responsible for drop-offs/pick-ups.**

School Entrance/Exit Plan

Class	Entrance Point	Arrival	Departure Point	Departure
Pre-school	Gate A	8:50am	Gate A	11:50am/2:50pm
Reception	Gate C/ Reception external entrance	8:40-8:55am	Gate C	3pm
Y1	Gate B or C/KS1 entrance	8:40-8:55am	Gate B	3:10pm
Y2	Gate B or C/ KS1 entrance	8:40-8:55am	Gate C	3:10pm
Y3	Gate B or C / Y3 Door	8:40-8:55am	Gate C	3:10pm
Y4	Gate B or C/ Y4 Door	8:40-8:55am	Gate B	3:20pm
Y5	Gate B or C/ Y5 Door	8:40-8:55am	Gate C	3:20pm
Y6	Gate B or C/ Y6 Door	8:40-8:55am	Gate C	3:20pm

Nb. Pupils with siblings in Duckpool Pre-school, or who are collected by a childminder will be dismissed at 3:10pm via Gate B.

School Access



Transportation to/from School

- We continue to encourage, where possible, pupils to walk/scoot/cycle to school with an adult. Children must walk their bike or scooter in the vicinity of and through the school gates and at all times on the school yard.
- Those arriving by car must park safely and considerately and must escort their child to the school gate.
- **It is incredibly important that parents do not park on 'no-stop' zones around school at any time – even if late or transporting more than one child.**
- The Parish car park will be closed both before and after school until further notice so please do not try to park here unless you have specific consent from the Headteacher.
- Those using public transport are strongly encouraged to check and follow Government guidelines.
- Parents must speak to the Headteacher about any intention to allow a child (only Y5 or 6) to come to school/go home unsupervised at least 2 days prior to the first instance.

Out of School Provision

- Small Saints out of School Club continues to offer wrap-around care from St Mary's parish hall.

Attendance and Leave of Absence

- Excellent attendance is the bedrock of pupil well-being and progress in school, and we encourage all families to prioritise their child's ongoing good attendance at school.
- It is essential that parents communicate absence in the normal way by phoning school by 9:30am on the first day of absence to provide information about the nature and likely length of absence.
- Leave of Absence forms must be requested by phone or email, and we would encourage parents to return these electronically where possible. A PDF version of the form is also available from the school website: <http://www.whickhamstmarys.org.uk/school-policiesdocuments.html>

Uniform and Pupil Belongings

- There is an expectation that pupils adhere to the full school uniform policy from the start of term (including footwear, hair, jewellery and make-up). Families experiencing difficulties in meeting these expectations must speak to Mr Wheatley as a matter of priority.
- Pupils must have a suitable coat/rain jacket in school at all times as pupils will be going outdoors as much as possible.
- Pupils must not bring any personal belongings in to school other than their coat/jacket, lunch box/bag and water bottle. All items must be clearly labelled with your child's name.
- Pupils will be asked to come to school in their PE kit and trainers on the day they have PE; the required day will be communicated in advance of the first instance of this in the Autumn Term.
- Pupils will only be permitted to have a mobile phone in school with required parental consent. A consent form must be requested by phone or email, and we would encourage parents to return these electronically where possible. A PDF version of the form is also available from the school website:
<http://www.whickhamstmarys.org.uk/school-policiesdocuments.html>

Expectations of Behaviour

- We continue to expect all pupils to follow new school routines and guidance regarding hygiene and all other protective measures we have put in place. Pupils will be regularly reminded of this in a positive and supportive way, and we understand that many of the changes will take time for pupils to fully grasp. However, persistent or dangerous disregard for school routines will be dealt with firmly in line with our school behaviour policy.

Parental Communication and Access to the School Site

- All communication with school should still come through the school office via phone (0191 4205828) or email (stmarysrcprimaryschool@gateshead.gov.uk).
- We discourage messages being passed on at the school gate.
- Parents will not be permitted on to the school site without prior arrangement with the Headteacher or School Business Manager.
- The school office will continue to operate between the hours of 8:30am to 3:30pm for telephone and email contact.
- Eschools will continue to be used as the primary source of communication for the foreseeable future including:
 - Weekly newsletters.
 - Term dates and updates.
 - Homework.
- Reading folders will come into school daily/weekly as per the class arrangements to be communicated by class teachers in September, and blue folders may be sent with additional items weekly.

School Meals

- Lunches will be eaten in the school hall.
- Lunch times will be staggered between Key Stages 1 and 2 to limit the number of children playing outside at any one time.
- Children in EYFS and KS1 can receive a free school meal as normal.
- All children may bring in their own packed lunch – this will be eaten in the hall alongside classmates.
- All pupils must bring in a full water bottle each day – this must be labelled clearly with the child's name.

Break Times

- Break times will be staggered between Key Stages 1 and 2 to limit the number of children playing outside at any one time.
- We envisage allowing pupils to play freely – rather than being assigned to a particular area with their class – but we have limited numbers on the yard at any one time for health and safety reasons.

In the Event of Future Partial/Full School Closure

- Though we do not envisage as great a risk of pupils being instructed to work from home, there may still be a requirement at some point in the future for pupils to do so – whether with regards to Covid or otherwise. The school will continue to operate via its Remote Learning Policy should this instance arise.
- The school's Remote Learning Policy is available to view on the school website:
<http://www.whickhamstmarys.org.uk/remote-learning.html>