

July 2020 Newsletter 2

Dear Parents and Carers

This is the final newsletter of the current school year. Thank you for all of the support you have provided throughout this most difficult of times. We really look forward to welcoming you and the children back to school in September. In this newsletter is an explanation of [arrangements for the new term](#); we hope that it will answer many of the questions you may have about the 'new normal' in schools.

Staffing News: Mrs. Coomey, EYFS and KS2 teaching assistant has been successful in her application for a post outside of education and she will sadly be leaving us during the summer holiday. Jenny's association with the school as both a parent and member of staff goes back twenty three years and the experience she has amassed in this time will be missed and hard to replace. We extend our thanks to her for her hard work and dedicated service to the children and wish her well in her new post.

Mrs. Emms, nursery nurse, will begin her adoption leave in the holiday. We send her our congratulations and also wish her well at this very exciting time for her and her husband John. Her duties will be covered by Mrs. Papuc and Mrs. Tyler from September.

The end of term ended nicely with an especially successful, if somewhat unusual, ending to primary school for Y6 pupils. We enjoyed time together at the park on Wednesday 15th July with a gathering of pupils, parents and staff for a picnic, mini-sports day and prize giving ceremony. This was then followed on Sunday 19th by our annual Leavers' Service. A large number of school families and members of St. John's Church attended the online service and it was without doubt a fantastic success and celebration of the children's time at St. John's School. The service included video memories of the children's time at school, a children's song, prayers and readings from the class. The link for the

recording will be published to the home page of the school website very shortly and it is highly recommended that you follow the link as the presentations by the children and the service were delightful.



Our proud recipient of the annual George Newman Gift 2020



Y6 Mini Sports Day





We all wish Y6 good luck, happiness and success as they move to secondary school.

SEPTEMBER REOPENING ARRANGEMENTS:

As mentioned earlier, we are planning for a full reopening in September. Please note that **WEDNESDAY 2ND SEPTEMBER** is a staff training day and school is closed to all pupils. The first day for children is therefore **THURSDAY 3RD SEPTEMBER**. Further staff training days and school term dates are published to the home page of the school website.

On that first day the children will be able to spend the afternoon with their previous class teacher. This will be an opportunity for closure to the current school year, impossible at this time due to the partial closure of schools. Please provide your child on the first day with a bag to bring home books and folders from this school year. Please also remember to send any medication into school on the first day as children who require epipens and asthma medication cannot remain in school without them.

The Department for Education (DfE) and Barnet Local Authority expect all pupils to return and schools have been instructed to impose fines should parents and carers choose not to send children back to school because of concerns about coronavirus. We are mindful that the perception of risk and the response to it varies from individual to individual and we

hope that our detailed risk assessment will address any current concerns that you may have.

Autumn Term Covid-19 Reopening Risk

Assessment: A second risk assessment has now been published to the home page of the school website ('Newsflash' section). This risk assessment (RA) seeks to address the challenges presented by a full return of pupils and staff. It incorporates many of the measures that were in-place this term to mitigate the risks of Covid-19 transmission and new arrangements to accommodate a much larger number of people present in school at any one time. This risk assessment remains in draft form until such time as it is approved and signed off by the local authority, Public Health England, the trade unions and the governing body. As such it remains a working document subject to change as and when the need occurs. The contents of the RA will apply until further notice and for the autumn term and most likely beyond.

Bubbles: The concept of the bubble will remain. Each year group will form its own bubble and the daily school timetable will seek to ensure that every year group remains separate from one another from the point of entry in the morning to departure in the afternoon. This arrangement necessitates staggered starts and finishes across the school and staggered breaks and lunchtimes throughout the day. Morning playtimes for some classes will begin at 10.15am and for others end at 11.10am; lunch breaks for some will begin at 11.30am with the final classes finishing at 1.45pm. The dining area will be extended to incorporate a section of the school hall making social distancing easier to achieve; routes in and out of the hall and dining room will be marked out with tape and hand cleaning points established at three spots enroute from playground to serving hatch. Such rearrangement of the school day will make it easier for us to keep bubbles separate throughout the day. Social distancing between year groups will also be easier to manage with

slight adjustments to start and end times for classes:

Arrival and Departure Times:

- *8.40am–3.00pm: Nursery and Reception
- *8.50am-3.10pm: Y1 and Y2
- *9.00am-3.20pm: Y3 and Y4
- *9.10am-3.30pm: Y5 and Y6

Entry and Collection Points:

- *Nursery, Y1, Y4 and Y6 via the car park and main school building entrance
- *Reception, Y2, Y3 and Y5 via the pedestrian gate and the playground

nb. vehicle movement in the car park will be prohibited from 8.25-9.25am and from 2.45-3.45pm.

Please remember to keep our children safe by driving and parking responsibly near to and around school. Parking is available in Bethune Park car park and it's just a couple of minutes away from school.

Parents and carers will not be allowed to accompany children to classes. In the first instance and for as long as necessary, nursery and reception parents will be permitted to accompany their children to and into the classroom as we recognise that the little ones will most probably require this level of support and reassurance from their parents. This arrangement will be time limited and as soon as each child settles to the daily routine it will be neither necessary nor encouraged. EYFS parents must comply with school social distancing rules and observe good hand and respiratory hygiene at all times.

We realise that many of you have more than one child at school and that these times may not be terribly convenient for you. To strike a balance between your needs and the need for us to run a smooth and effective timetable, we propose that siblings will enter school together in the morning (siblings to arrive at the same time as the youngest child's arrival time slot; you can leave as soon as we receive your children from you) but they will depart

separately at the end of the school day (you will have to wait for your last child to be dismissed with his/her classmates). When arriving at school to drop and collect, it is vital that you do not congregate on the pavements or school grounds to chat, that you maintain social distancing between families and you supervise your child/children when roadside (we will take all necessary measures to accommodate you on school grounds when dropping off and collecting); instructions and supervision will be provided on your first visit to school. Please model social distancing and good hygiene practices in-front of your children as this will make it easier for them to follow our school rules and expectations regarding this.

Children will be allowed to leave cycles and scooters at school as long as they are able to park, secure and collect them by themselves from the cycle shelter and scooter racks (you will not be able to access the racks yourselves to do it for them).

As during lockdown, we will not be operating our usual 'open door policy'. This will enable us to restrict and control movement on site. All contact with the school will be via staff on gate duty, telephone, email or our texting system. Meetings will be by appointment only for the foreseeable future.

Hygiene Protocols: The reopening risk assessment includes details of the measures we will operate to promote and maintain good hygiene in and around the school. We will make full use of the NHS 'test and trace' system but we do need your help with this as it is vital that you communicate with us immediately should your child or any member of your household present with any Covid-19 symptoms:

The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

- a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)

-a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)

-a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

Most people with coronavirus have at least 1 of these symptoms.

If you have any of the main symptoms of coronavirus:

-Inform the school

-Get a test to check if you have coronavirus as soon as possible.

-Stay at home and do not have visitors until you get your test result – only leave your home to have a test.

-Anyone you live with, and anyone in your support bubble, must also stay at home until you get your result.

Coronavirus tests can be booked online through the NHS [testing and tracing for coronavirus website](#), or ordered by telephone via NHS 119 for those without access to the internet.

In September we will not take the children's temperatures on arrival. Hand sanitising will take place on entry to the classroom. The school will be well stocked with soap, hand gel and cleaning products and every class will have its own sanitising station with additional wall mounted sanitisers strategically placed around the building. The daily cleaning regime will be enhanced to include mid-morning and mid-afternoon cleaning of touch-points (handrails, light switches, door handles, etc.), followed by a thorough clean at the end of the day.

Please inform the school if your child has developed an allergic response to the frequent use of hand sanitiser so that we can provide

encouragement for regular washing with soap and hot water.

Our curriculum offer and methods of organisation: Every effort will be made to provide as normal a school experience as possible despite the fact that there will be some inevitable changes in provision. Changes to practice include forward facing desks (Y1 from autumn 2 and Y2-Y6 from September), no large gatherings for assemblies, no singing and no contact sport. Use of outdoor equipment such as the activity trails and climbing frame will be scheduled for weekly use (Monday-Thursday) for individual classes. Lunchtime clubs for the choir and sports teams will cease until further notice and there will be no inter-school sport for the foreseeable future. Extra curricular activities such as those provided by Barnet F.C. and squad training will also cease until controls are able to be relaxed.

While every effort will be made to keep class bubbles apart we will have to remain somewhat relaxed about social distancing within the classroom bubble; to operate otherwise would be impossible given the size of classrooms and space between desks. Please help us to reduce the risk of cross contamination by providing your child with their own pencil case fully stocked with a red pen for editing work, writing pencils, coloured pencils, felt-tip pens, rubbers, small rulers and pencil sharpeners. We ask that you also provide a box of tissues for your child's own use and a sturdy reusable, filled water bottle every day (the water fountains will be decommissioned for the time being). Other equipment will be shared between pupils in the classroom and cleaned at the end of every day to the best of our ability. Similarly shared laptops, chrome books and sports equipment will be cleaned before use by another class and every year group will be provided with their own crate of equipment for playtimes.

Please note that children may attend school wearing their P.E. kit on the day that they have games and this kit can be worn throughout the

day. Every child will require school issue jogging bottoms and tops during the colder months of the year: autumn-spring 2). Notice of the days when children have P.E. and swimming will follow towards the start of the term in the autumn class forecast.

Year groups will be timetabled to use the MUGA during playtimes across the week. Please ensure that your child's footwear is suitable for play on the MUGA; most boys' shoes have soles very similar to that of trainers and they are therefore suitable for wearing on the MUGA; this is not the case for many of the girls. We will not be encouraging children to change clothing or footwear during the school day to minimise the gathering of pupils in corridors, so please ensure that every child, including girls, comes to school in shoes with soles suited to an astro turf surface.

Where possible social distancing will be maintained when moving around the school and staff will be mindful of effectively managing their own space too; these things are not without their challenges given the limitation of space and the obvious need to interact with pupils and support their learning. These things will be virtually impossible to achieve in the early years classrooms given the age, understanding and needs of our three, four and five year old pupils. I know that you will fully understand the challenges facing staff and appreciate that everything we do is done with the children's best interests at heart.

Drop-in visits for new starters in EYFS will be shortened from two to one hours at the start of term. Miss Napier will contact you with all the information you need for the induction of your child to nursery or reception class. There will be provision for those parents of children new to the school to enter and remain on school premises as part of the settling in process for your child. This arrangement will end as soon as judged appropriate but until that time please respect our social distancing and hygiene rules to keep our children and staff safe.

If pupils or even a whole class should find themselves in quarantine, the school will offer blended learning. This is a combination of normal teaching and learning for those able to attend school and home learning for those well enough to learn but unable to attend school. We will do our best to ensure that home learning is worthwhile and enjoyable but this will inevitably have to include a significant element of distance learning as offered through Oak Academy online and other online providers.

We know that learning and pupil progress will have suffered due to coronavirus and the forced partial closure of schools. This will mean that teachers will need to identify and address significant shortfalls in knowledge and skills from last year's curriculum before they are able to move on to the programmes of 2020-2021; this will be especially important for the core objectives of maths and English. We will however continue to offer a broad and balanced curriculum from day one of the autumn term. Outings and trips beyond the local area and within walking distance have been cancelled for at least the autumn term and until such time as we are confident that it is safe to venture into town or to venues with large gatherings of young people and adults.

Our curriculum will not however be lacking in interest and excitement and where possible and safe to do so, learning will be enhanced by workshops run by outside providers. The quality of the workshops we offer is quite exceptional and the children benefit enormously from such experiences. Workshop providers will have their own systems and risk assessments in place for visiting schools and they will also have to comply with our own Covid-19 arrangements. We therefore ask that you continue to make your voluntary contributions to our wider curriculum programme as without your support we will not be able to afford to offer these valuable learning experiences to the children.

Covid-19 has affected us all in different ways and with this in mind we will be sensitive and responsive to the emotional needs of all pupils. Our PSHCE syllabus will therefore take centre place in our curriculum offer from September. Please do not hesitate to tell us if your child has found the lockdown experience especially challenging. Your conversations with us, should you feel the need to speak to us, will be treated confidentially and will be used to inform our offer to the whole school as well as to individual pupils. Staff are well placed to cater for the needs of all children and I consider our in-house pastoral care provision to be of the highest quality for those children and their families who wish to engage with us.

Swimming lessons: We have received the green light to reintroduce swimming lessons from September. The school is in the process of undertaking a rigorous and comprehensive risk assessment covering all aspects of provision. We are doing this in conjunction with our pool hire partners, Barnet Pools (who manage our pool plant) and the risk assessment advice of such organisations as Swim England. Our first meeting for this purpose took place this week with further meetings scheduled in August and September. When completed and signed off, the risk assessment will be published to the school website for you to see. When all the measures are in-place to mitigate risk, lessons will recommence. At this point all pupils (EYFS and Y1 excluded) will be expected to resume swimming lessons and your child's participation in swimming lessons will not be optional.

Arrangements for EYFS and Reception class pupils will have to be different. As emergent swimmers, our swimming instructor Naama Kissos-Boast would normally be in the pool with the children. Covid-19 restrictions do not permit this. Given their vulnerability in the water and therefore for their own safety, we will not be providing lessons for our youngest children until guidance changes or the

proficiency of individual swimmers is such that they are deemed safe to be in the water without an instructor.

Please continue to make your monthly or annual contributions to the governing body maintenance fund. Given the loss of income from lettings and the funding challenges that all schools face, we are dependent upon your generosity in providing financial support to the school to enhance our offer to the children. Please remember that 60% of your contribution goes towards maintaining our pool, employing a swimming teacher and providing swimming lessons to your children in normal circumstances, from nursery through to Y6. Support of EYFS and Y1 parents remains just as important throughout this period given the fixed costs of running the pool and our intentions to resume lessons for this age group as soon as we can. Thank you for your anticipated and continuing support.

All being well, swimming lessons are due to begin again the week commencing Monday 14th September.

Sherpa Kids: Getting parents back to work is as important as getting children back to school and we obviously support the government's intentions and wishes in this respect. We therefore intend to offer wrap around care with the reintroduction of breakfast and after school clubs from Monday 7th September. Our out-of-hours child care partner, Sherpa Kids, will be in-touch with you in due course with all the information you need to enrol your child/children in one or both of these clubs. Once again, stringent measures will be put in-place to manage and reduce the risks posed by Covid-19 and a full risk assessment written by Sherpa Kids and approved by the school will be ready for the start of the term. The RA will be published to the home page of the school website for you to read. The first planning meeting between Sherpa Kids and the school also took place this week with further meetings to follow. We have the added benefit of out-of-hours clubs being run by school staff who

know all the children well and are totally familiar with school practice and Covid-19 risk assessments.

We are also investigating the possibility of extending wrap around care to some children in the nursery. This could be possible from January 2021. Please let me know if this is something which may be of interest to you. More information regarding this to follow in due course.

Information about wrap around care can be found by visiting the school website.

The process of welcoming everyone back to school is exciting but not without its challenges. As such it will be inevitable that we will have to tweak our plans here and there as we put them to the test and discover that further improvements can be made. As such, please be supportive of the measures we shall introduce and patient if and when they are modified according to our experiences and identified need. Everything we do will be subject to review and alteration as we know from recent months that dealing with and responding to Covid-19 developments demands resourcefulness, adaptability and resilience.

If you are travelling abroad this summer and you are affected by quarantine requirements, please keep us informed if this impacts upon your child's return to school. Whatever your plans for the next few weeks, I hope that you enjoy your time together and you remain well and safe. We look forward to seeing you again in
September.

Graham
24.07.2020

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