



St Joseph's Catholic Academy

Member of the Newman Catholic Collegiate

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Acting Executive Principal- Mrs D Farmer

Acting Head of School – Mrs R Wilson

Monday 18th May 2020

Dear children, parents and families of St Joseph's,

Each week that I write to you, there is always an update or a change to report and it always comes with mixed feelings. The government announced this week that our children in Pre-school, Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 will be able to return to school on Monday 1st June; initially this will be on a part-time basis for the children in our Pre-school and Nursery. Children in Years 2- 5 will continue, for the time being, to be home-educated. From the responses that parents of children in Early Years, Year 1 and Year 6 gave in our survey last week, it is clear that many of you are feeling more unsettled and concerned than ever. In the next two weeks, the staff will be in school, preparing it for the return of those children whose parents have committed to sending them back on 1st June. We will be delighted to see the children back in school, and it is important that you understand that we will be putting into place a considerable number of measures to maximise the safety of the children and the staff. Such measures will include no more than 15 children per group, with a consistent teacher and member of support staff all week, adhering to social distancing wherever possible. Children will not be socialising with children in other groups during lessons or break times and teaching resources will be restricted, with children not being allowed to share their resources with others. There will be a one-way system around school to minimise any cross-contamination, staggered start and collection times for different groups and good hygiene practices will continue to be enforced at every opportunity. These of course are only a few of the plans that we are putting into place, and for those parents whose children will be returning on 1st June, you will be notified of all measures and expectations in due course.

If you have not yet let us know that you are intending to send your child back to school on 1st June, including those who opted for 'Maybe' on last week's survey, you must notify us by 12pm on Tuesday so that we can make concrete plans for your child's return. If you do not let us know by this deadline, then your child will **not be permitted to return on 1st June or any day that week. Going forward, if you do wish your child to return at a later date, you will need to give us one week's notice in order for them to start the week after. It is very important that you let us know if you are coming to school to ensure we have the appropriate staffing levels. If you have not informed the office, then you will be turned away. Please email the school office to let us know your intentions.**

If you do send your child back, then they **MUST** attend for the full period. You cannot pick and choose which days you send your child.



Unfortunately, there will be some children that we will need to complete risk assessments for in order to ensure they can return to schools, so that they do not place themselves or others at risk. Due to this, we will not permit these pupils to start back in the first week. If this is the case for your child, we will be in touch and notify you of what we will be doing to plan a safe return for them.

Some parents of children in Early Years Year 1 and Year 6 have indicated that their children will not be returning to school on the 1st June, and we fully accept and understand this. Children's attendance records will not be penalised at this time for those who make this choice. For those who are choosing to keep their children at home despite school being open for their class, home-learning will not be provided, although your children should still be able to access the class pages, the BBC Bitesize resources (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/dailylessons>) and the learning on the National Oak Academy website (<https://www.thenational.academy/>); however, I cannot say how long resources for Early Years and Years 1 and 6 will be available for on these national sites.

Children in Years 2 to 5 will not be returning to school unless they have already been attending as a key worker's child. Work and letters will continue to be provided for these children in the same way as they have been since school closed.

Your child's class teacher will be contacting them again this week, so if you have any questions, please do ask the staff and we will do all we can to answer any questions or concerns you may have. Our own school staff will be based at St Joseph's this week, so please contact the school if you have any further queries.

Let us continue to pray that there will soon be an end to this terrible pandemic and we can resume some kind of normality for all before too long. There is nothing that all of the staff at St Joseph's want more than to see us return as a whole-school community again, as soon as it is safe to do so. I will continue to keep you all in my thoughts and prayers and will update you as soon as more information and guidance is available.

God bless you all.

Mrs R Wilson,

Acting Head of School.