



SACRED HEART RC NURSERY AND PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Dear Parents/Carers,

Proposed Return to School

Following on from my letter yesterday and after reading the Department for Education guidance, I can now offer you some additional information.

As you know, the Government is asking schools to prepare for opening to selected year groups, stating, *"We will only do this provided that the 5 key tests set by government justify the changes at the time, including that the rate of infection is decreasing and the enabling programmes set out in the roadmap are operating effectively"*. These year groups are Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6.

I aim to be completely transparent and give you all the facts to enable you to make an informed choice about your child returning to school. If every pupil in Nursery, Reception, Y1 and Y6 come back on June 1st plus the key worker and vulnerable children, the school will have 144 children in the building plus all available staff. This could increase if further key workers take up a place in school. At this moment, I cannot guarantee anything 100% as we have only been asked to plan for a return. Things are still changing daily.

To illustrate this point, yesterday, I created a plan to accommodate and staff 125 children at Sacred Heart. At 8pm, the government released further information which then included nursery children, meaning the numbers suddenly rose to 144. I am yet to secure a safe plan to accommodate all 144.

What would be really helpful at this stage is an indication from parents as to whether you plan to send your child/ren back to school or not. To assist you with this decision I have prepared some bullet points below.

What I can tell you right now:

- The government has asked schools to plan for the return of YR, Y1 and Y6.
- The guidance on nursery is still a little woolly and I am seeking further advice.
- The Department for Education released further guidance at around 8pm last night but there are still lots of questions which need to be answered.
- We are still open for children of key workers essential to the covid-19 response and vulnerable children and will be throughout the rest of term (including the half term holidays). Home remains the safest place for your children – until the 1st June when science will tell us it's safe for some children and staff to be back in school.

- Children will be taught in groups of between 10-15 in a single classroom with a teacher (not necessarily their usual teacher or in their usual classroom). They will stay in this single group throughout their time in school. Contact will be restricted to their designated staff and they will not be able to mix with other groups, including those within their own class. Their designated small group will stay as a group all day, every day. We cannot guarantee friendship groups will be together and once the groups have been set, it is unlikely that we will change them until we are instructed to do so by the government.
- There will be a staggered start and end to the school day: different times for different classes.
- Social distancing rules will be in place for parents at drop up/pick up, now referred to by the government as 'pinch times'.
- There will be staggered playtimes and lunch times where social distancing will be met as far as humanly possible with small children.
- Children will be taught to social distance to the best of their ability.
- There will be no whole school gatherings/worship of any description.
- Hand washing will continue to be our greatest protective factor. We will ensure regular handwashing.
- Staff will not be wearing any PPE as it is deemed by the government as unnecessary in schools (plus it would frighten the children).
- Any child showing symptoms, no matter how small will be isolated and their parents will be called to collect them. You will then need to isolate as a family for at least 7 days (potentially 14). There will be no negotiation on this.
- There will be an increase in cleaning at the end of each day, with staff sanitising equipment, surfaces and door handles at regular intervals throughout the day to the best of their ability.
- Classrooms will be ventilated with open windows.
- Movement in the classroom will be restricted.
- Those children remaining at home will continue to receive their learning through Purple Mash planned by their class teachers but their class teachers will not be available throughout the day to communicate with them as they will be in school teaching other year groups.
- Parents of children in multiple classes will have children at home and in school. There will be no offer for children in Y2,3,4, or 5. We simply do not have the space or staff to facilitate it.
- There will be no government fines issued for non-attendance but the government are encouraging parents to take up their child's place offer.
- The staff at Sacred Heart are working tirelessly to make the school as safe as possible for your child's return.
- Your child will be welcomed back with smiles, love and the emotional support they need but if you choose to keep them home, we understand that too and will support your decision. There are no right or wrongs with this - only opinions. You must do what you think is right for you and your family.

Key Workers / Vulnerable Children

- We do not anticipate extending the amount of days for vulnerable children who are not in YR,1 and 6 above the hours that they are presently attending. For some children with additional needs, the proposed changes on June 1st could be far more emotionally harmful than staying at home. Discussions will be had on an individual basis.

- If your child has already been attending school throughout the lockdown having 'qualified' for a place, they will continue to attend and will follow the Purple Mash learning set by the Y2,3,4 and 5 teachers. They will be away from the other children in separate rooms.

Please complete the attached form and return to admin@shrcps.org as soon as possible. The sooner I know how many children to expect, the sooner I can move on with the planning for the potential return. Therefore, the quicker you can return your form, the better

I have created a space for you to ask questions. I may not be able to respond to you all individually but will use the questions/concerns/responses to create a FAQ document which I will circulate to all.

Thank you for your patience and continuing support.
Take care and stay safe

MRS NICHOLA DAY
Headteacher