



St Ambrose R.C. Primary School

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Loving minds ♥ hearts ♥ hands.

20th May 2020

St Ambrose Extension of School Provision Summer Term 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

As we are sure you are aware, the UK Government have recently released new guidance around the country's Coronavirus recovery strategy. Central to the Government's plans for recovery is the expansion of the number of pupils returning to primary school settings. The latest guidance for parents can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>. This document will also answer a range of questions you may have regarding potential issues such as siblings, attendance, travel and testing.

All decisions regarding children returning to St Ambrose have been made following robust risk assessment processes which underpin current plans for extending provision.

Headlines

The main headline to be taken from the latest guidance is undoubtedly the return to school of Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 'from the week commencing 1 June 2020 at the earliest'. The government have made it clear that this will only happen on the proviso that the five key tests set by government justify the changes at the time, including that the rate of infection is decreasing and the enabling programs set out in the Government Roadmap are operating effectively.

Organisation

We have been working tirelessly to try and meet the Government's requests. As you can imagine when planning and organising the possible return of hundreds of children, there will be an almost endless list of steps to consider. Some of the considerations recommended by the Government include:

- organising small class groups
- organising classrooms to maintain space between seats and desks
- deciding which lessons or activities will be delivered and reducing movement around the classroom
- staggered break times (including lunch)
- staggered drop-off and collection times
- organising pick-up protocols that minimise adult to adult contact.



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This is in addition to:

- considering how to keep small groups of children together throughout the day and to avoid larger groups of children mixing
- considering how play equipment is used ensuring it is appropriately cleaned between groups of children using it, and that multiple groups do not use it simultaneously
- removing soft furnishings, soft toys and equipment which are hard to clean.

What does this mean for my child?

When your child returns to school it will be very different to the school they left. The Government guidance suggests (in the first instance) to:

- Keep cohorts together where possible - this means children will remain in the same small groups each and every day and will not necessarily work with previous classmates.
- Increase and supervise careful personal hygiene, handwashing and cleanliness of working spaces and equipment.
- Ensure that the same teacher(s) are assigned to each group - this means your child may have a different teacher for the duration of the half term on their return to school.
- Ensure that wherever possible children and young people use the same classroom or area of a setting throughout the day - this means your child may be in a different classroom setting.
- Reduce mixing within school - this means each group will have a different playtime and a different lunchtime.
- Use outside space - this means children should be prepared for outdoor learning in all weathers.
- Reduce the use of shared resources - this means it may not be possible to provide resources to take home, such as reading books, etc.
- It is advised that clothing should be washed as often as possible to reduce the spread of the virus, therefore it is acceptable for families to send their children to school in comfortable, sensible clothing which is easily washed.
- Families may send their child to school with a packed lunch or order a lunch through Dolce, but this will be a cold option and eaten in your child's small teaching bubble, with the aim of reducing contact with other children.

When the guidance is fully implemented, many of the routines, lessons, aesthetics and relationships our children have come to know and love will be very different. We hope you will take the time to prepare your own child for this. One thing that will certainly not change is the love, care and nurture they will receive from each and every member of my staff. They make your children happy and they will continue to do so during this transitional period.

Health, safety and well-being

On any return to school, our first priority will be to ensure the health, safety and well-being of our children and staff. This will be a huge effort for all concerned as the guidance states:

'We know that, unlike older children and adults, early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff.'



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There are approximately 60 children in our early year's department and it has not been possible to safely offer provision for all children at the same time. Priority has been given to reception children in the first instance and will be reviewed regularly. Based on numbers of children who have expressed an interest to return to school when they are permitted to do so, **there will not be an offer for nursery children at the present time.**

As a school we will endeavour at all times to maintain social distancing guidelines, but there is no doubt this will be almost impossible. Consequently, we are awaiting further guidance from the teaching unions, the Local Authority and the Diocese regarding this matter. This guidance has significantly influenced the model of transition we have chosen to adopt. This has also influenced the number of staff we have at our disposal and the number of parents who will be comfortable sending their children back to school. However, I can promise that my dedicated staff will help children to maintain the highest of hygiene standards wherever possible.

Summary

The guidelines released by the government leave the school with much to consider in order to meet the full demands of returning Reception, Y1 and Y6 to school on Monday 1st June.

We are certain you will have many of your own questions which the guidance does not answer. This letter is designed to outline how different school will be in the first instance and we would very much appreciate your patience at this time as we formulate the safest way forward for the children of St Ambrose. We want to get this right and SAFE for our wonderful children. We want to get this right for our supportive parents. We want to get this right for our dedicated staff.

Also due to Government guidance, we must ask that children enter school unaided- this means that **parents cannot bring children into school.** We understand that this will be difficult for some children particularly in Reception who have not been in school for a number of weeks. Please help prepare children for this before their intended start.

All staff will be trained on the new safety and hygiene guidelines and protocols on Monday 8th June.

At the time of writing this letter, we are able to offer the following gradual extension of school provision from 9th June.

Week 1: School will be open on 9th 10th and 11th June for Y6 children 8.45-3.15pm

Week 2: Commencing 15th June and until further notice, school will be open Monday -Thursday for Y6 children and Y1 children and Reception children.

Entry to site for specific year groups.

Year 6 will enter the school at the beginning of the school day from the Key Stage 2 playground and will enter via the red fire exit door next to the outdoor stage (the red door closest to the Year 4 classroom). They will exit through the same door.

Year 1 will enter the school at the beginning of the school day from the Key Stage 2 playground and will enter via the red fire exit door underneath the shelter. They will exit through the same door.



Reception will enter the school via the entrance in the GIFT Garden. To get to this entrance, the gate in the corner of the school car park will be opened. Reception children and their parents **MUST NOT** enter the Key Stage 2 playground. The children will exit by the same gate.

There will be signs and staff to remind everyone where children should enter the school.

The playground will be marked to help children with social distancing whilst they wait to enter the building.

Thank you for continuing to support me and our school community at this difficult time. All queries regarding the guidance should be emailed to the team at schoolcommunication@st-ambrose.manchester.sch.uk

Yours faithfully,

Mrs Ruth Vayro