

Headteacher:
Mrs K Robson BEd (Hons)
Linden Close
Winterbourne
BS36 1LG



Tel: 01454 867105
Fax: 01454 867106

Website: www.stmichaelswinterbourne.co.uk
Email: office@stmichaelswinterbourne.co.uk

20 May 2020

Dear Parents,

Since the announcement of the government's possible phased re-opening of schools from 1st June, we have been working on our plan to be able to open the school to more pupils. Pupil and staff safety have remained the primary concern at all times during the planning process and for that reason it is not possible to welcome back all pupils in the way the prime minister described. Where schools are unable to offer full-time places to Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 we have been instructed to prioritise, beginning with the children of keyworkers, followed by our youngest children, in our case Reception class. We will assess this weekly, to see if we are able to expand our offer to Year 1 next and finally Year 6, though this may be over a longer period. The prioritisation has been dictated by the government rather than school level. We understand that many of you will be disappointed that your child is not returning on 1st June as the government announced, but it would not be safe to open for all year groups that are suggested at once. Our return to school will also be reliant on the teaching unions being satisfied that schools are safe to open.

The government also state classes should be no more than 15 in size. Due to the social distancing guidance of remaining 2 metres apart, we have assessed that many of our classrooms will only be able to accommodate a maximum of 10 children, these will be known as 'bubbles'. Therefore a class of 30 children is going to require at least 3 staff members in three separate classrooms. The children and staff have to remain in their bubbles and are **not** allowed to mix. We have tried to ensure that children will be with a familiar adult, though we cannot guarantee that this will be their teacher. Their key role will be to reassure the children as best they can.

The children **will not** be taught in their usual classroom - other classrooms have been adapted. Please be aware this is not going to look like their normal classroom. We have been advised to remove all soft furnishings, soft toys and small parts. The children will be sat at their own desks/workstations when in the classroom.

Equipment

Equipment is not allowed to be shared, the children will be given their own pack of equipment. The only items to be brought in from home are packed lunches and two drinks bottles. Drinks bottles will be kept on their own desk. Initially, reading books will not be going home due to possible contamination and the lack of time to be able to clean each book on top of the extra cleaning that is required in school.

Hygiene

Areas of the school building will be cleaned throughout the day. Children will be expected to enter the school building and wash their hands immediately, as well as regularly throughout the day.

Organisation of children

We are open for the keyworker children **every day**, which will be a mixed age group. For Reception class, we will be open for 4 days on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Please note the school will not be open for Reception children on a Wednesday, this is to ensure that the classrooms and resources can be thoroughly cleaned. It also allows the teachers who usually teach other year groups to plan for their year group's home learning and receive their weekly planning, preparation and assessment entitlement.

Teachers will decide on the groups based upon their knowledge of the children and their friendships; we cannot ensure that they will be with all of their friends. This is not for negotiation and there should be no requests of groups.

Your child may fall into two categories i.e. Reception and Keyworker. The children are not allowed to switch bubbles so you, as parents, will need to make the decision whether you wish for your child to be with their peer group or the keyworker children based upon the days you need your child to be in school. If your child needs to be in school on a Wednesday then they would have to remain with the keyworker group for the whole term. We have to know a week in advance of your child's attendance.

Keyworkers

Keyworkers will continue to book in using the usual form for the days that are required. We can be flexible with timings for this group of children only. We are open every day for keyworker children. Keyworker children will be based in the Year 5 and 6 classroom.

Breakfast club will be available for the children of keyworkers. We are not able to extend this to other year groups as it would mean that children would be mixing 'bubbles'. Your place **must** be booked in advance.

Parents

Parents are not to enter the school building and must adhere to social distancing measures at all times in the vicinity and onsite. In the interests of our neighbours, please do not wait in Linden Close. If you need to communicate with teachers or office staff, this should be via telephone or email. Please note that all teachers will be in school working with children and so will not be available to respond during the school day. On the first day, a member of staff will be on the gate to let you know which classroom your child will be based in. Staff in the 'bubble' will greet children at the entrance to the classroom that they are going to be taught in, **not** their usual classroom and send them to immediately wash their hands. The Reception children will be taught in the Y2-4 classrooms. You must remain 2 metres apart on the school playground and your children must remain with you, they must not run off to other areas of the school to play. On collection, parents and children must leave the site immediately. **No cars** should be driven onto the school site - this is for staff only. We encourage you to walk to school where possible.

Drop-off and collection

8:45/3:00 – Children's surnames A-H

8:55/3:10 – Children's surnames I-M

9:05/3:20 – Children's surnames N-Z

Frequently asked questions

Do I have to send my child to school?

No. The government have stated that **NO FINES will be issued** during this period if parents choose to keep their children at home.

Do I need to wear uniform?

No. Clothes should be washed daily and new clothes changed into when you get home. Coats will be kept in the classroom on the backs of chairs.

What happens at lunchtime?

Children can bring in a packed lunch or order a school meal online in the usual way. The children will remain in their classrooms to eat and stay in their bubbles throughout all breaktimes/playtimes. They will be expected to play at a distance from each other as far as possible.

What if someone in the 'bubble' shows symptoms of Covid-19?

If a child (or staff member) becomes ill, they will be taken to a separate room and kept in isolation. They will remain under adult supervision who will be in full PPE. If they need to use the bathroom they will use a designated bathroom. Both rooms will need to be deep-cleaned before they are able to be re-used. All children and staff in that bubble will be sent home and told to self-isolate, book a test and wait for the results. If results are negative, they can return, if they are positive then the government's isolation procedure should be followed.

What will the children do during the day?

We are prioritising the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils and plan activities accordingly. We will be following the 'Recovery model' suggested by the local authority. We will spend as much time learning outside as the weather allows.

Will they do PE?

The children will have active sessions each day though this will not be like their usual PE lessons. The children will remain in the same clothes, they will not get changed and will not need a separate PE kit.

What if my child needs first aid?

If your child falls over, an adult in full PPE will deliver first aid to your child.

Will my child still receive home learning activities?

Due to the reduced capacity of staff, home learning will not necessarily be the same as it has been. We will be using all of the teachers in school over the week to work with the children that we have in school. Your child may be supported at home by other members of staff that are not their class teacher. Emails may not be responded to at the same speed that they have previously, as the teacher will be in school working with children.

What if my child is vulnerable or lives with a vulnerable person in the household?

If you feel that your safety would be compromised by sending your child to school, then stay at home.

The final decision for schools to return will be taken by the government on 28th May and so we should be in a position to clarify with you on the 29th May. We will send out another form to Reception parents over half term that must state whether you intend to send your child back for the first week.

As you can see, for the safety of the whole school community we have had to make some drastic decisions and changes. It is with a heavy heart that I write this letter – this is not the place that I would ever want for the children and staff at St Michael's, but is how it has to be for now.

Take great care everyone,



Kirsty Robson, Headteacher



Peter Hitchman, Chair of Governors