



St Mary's Catholic First School
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Head Teacher: Mrs Paula Fearn



21st May 2020

Dear Parent/carer,

We hope that you and your family are well and coping in these challenging and unprecedented times.

Our school has been open for the children of key workers and vulnerable children since the lockdown began on 23rd March, and staff have been supporting the home learning of children who have not been in school. We are very grateful to you for the support that you have provided for your child/children over this difficult period.

Following the government's announcement of its intention to begin the phased opening of schools from 1st June 2020, Plymouth CAST Multi Academy Trust has taken the following decisions about the opening of its schools.

Plymouth CAST will only consider the opening of its schools once invited to do so by the government on or after the 1st June 2020, and once the government's 5 tests for moving to the next phase have been satisfied. Furthermore, each of our schools is required to complete a comprehensive risk assessment and planning process that will be approved by the Headteacher, Trust Education and Standards Manager, and Trust Director of Education before it is authorised to open.

The Trust will continue to work with our school leaders, staff, professional associations, local authorities, the Regional Schools Commissioner and government to ensure that the re-opening of our schools takes place at the right time and in the right way for the health, welfare and safety of our children, students and staff.

After careful consideration and extensive discussion, the Trust has directed its schools to begin its phased opening in the following way:

- In-school care provision for the children of key workers and vulnerable children from all year groups will continue.
- Any model of opening must include Year Six
- Where it is safe to do so provision must include Nursery, Reception and Year 1, or any safe combination of these year groups.



- No year group other than those specified by the government, N, R, Y1 and Y6 is able to return to school at this stage.

It is important to note that the Trust's directive and the local planning decisions of the school may change due to guidance from the government, the local authority, Public Health England, and other appropriate agencies. The government's date of 1st June for the phased re-opening of schools is only provisional and subject to the nature of the pandemic and national control measures as we approach that date.

St Mary's plan for a safe return:

Further to our letter last week we can confirm that school will continue to be open for our Key worker families, Reception Class and Year 1. Unfortunately, due to social distancing guidance we cannot offer St Mary's Haycorns children a place at this time therefore the Preschool will remain closed.

Reception Class

Reception class will be split into smaller groups (15 max), these children will remain in the external building with access to the outside provision.

Year One

Year 1 children will be split into smaller groups (15 max) and will be in the Year 2 classroom and the library which has become a classroom.

Key worker Group

This group of children will be in the Year 3 & Year 4 classrooms and Hall.

- **Teaching groups will remain the same throughout the week, the only alteration will be with support staff who are on different contracts.**
- **All groups will have access to their own set of toilet facilities which will be cleaned and maintained throughout the school day.**
- **Each child will have their own workspace which we have personalised with their photograph.**
- **Pencil cases are not allowed, each child will be given a wallet with all the necessary stationary.**

School Day

- **To help keep children, families and staff safe we will have a staggered "drop off" and "pick-up".**
- **The school car park will be CLOSED to all vehicles.**
- **We are requesting that you stick rigidly to the timings to ensure a smooth and safe transition to and from school.**
- **Our car park lines will now become waiting bays, families will wait within the white lines and be called forward by a member of the school team.**
- **It will be a one-way system only.**

Group	Morning	Afternoon
Key worker	8.40 - 8.50am	3.05 - 3.15pm
Year 1	8.50 – 9.00am	2.55 - 3.05pm
Reception	9.00 - 9.10am	2.45 - 2.55pm

Uniform

- Please can children come in their St Mary's PE kit (suitable to the weather of the day) or as close to that as possible. Please can your child wear a sun hat daily.
- Please can you apply sunscreen before your child comes to school.
- Children only need to bring their lunch box; they do not need any other bags.

Lunches and break times

- There will be a staggered lunch and playtime to allow minimum exposure to other children during the school day.
- Children will eat lunch in their classrooms and then have a play on the school field.
- All children must bring their own packed lunch, there is no hot food available.

Wellbeing

- Staff will spend time daily supporting the wellbeing of our children as school will be completely different for them, however, please be reassured our top priority is to make sure all children feel; happy and safe.
- We will be using Trauma Informed School resources, Trick box resources and ELSA resources to support the children.

Cleaning/Good Hygiene

- Children will all have their own working area and equipment.
- All classrooms will have tissues/wipes/gloves readily available.
- Surfaces will be cleaned throughout the day.
- Doors and windows will be open to ensure good ventilation of air throughout the building.
- EYFS toys will be cleaned on a daily basis and in-between use during the school day.
- Toilets will be checked and cleaned regularly throughout the day by teaching staff.
- Pupils and staff are asked to wear different clothes or clothes that have been washed each day.
- On Thursday and Friday of Half Term school is closed to the Key Worker children and a deep clean will take place of the school building.

Home Learning

- Y2, Y3 and Y4 will continue to have weekly home learning set online, however, there will be a delay in response time as staff will be supporting the "groups" of children in school.
- Unfortunately, we will not have the facility to offer weekly online learning for Reception and Yr 1, however, teachers will direct you to websites to support you if you choose for your child to remain at home.
- Mrs Hunns daily RWI phonic sessions will continue daily on our school website for home learning.
- Reading books will NOT be sent home when school returns.

First Aid

- The same first aid guidelines will remain in place.
- We have 4 paediatric first aiders in school.
- We will continue to send First Aid forms home should your child have had any medical treatment.

School Office

- Please email for the school office if you have any queries during the school day, the office email is monitored regularly throughout the day and you will be responded to quickly.
- There will be no access to the office at the beginning or end of the school day.

Key Worker children

Please can we ask that you consider the government advice below for Key Workers:

'The single most important action we can all take, in fighting coronavirus, is to stay at home in order to protect the NHS and save lives.'

"Critical workers are defined as parents whose work is critical to the COVID-19 response, including those who work in health and social care and in other critical sectors. **However, many parents working in these critical sectors will be able to ensure their child is kept at home. Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be, to limit the chance of the virus spreading.**"

We are very grateful to you for your support and understanding as we try to manage this situation in the best interests of our children, families, staff and the national COVID-19 recovery plan.

Yours sincerely,



Raymond Friel
CEO, Plymouth CAST



Paula Fearn
Headteacher, St Mary's Catholic First School