

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School



1st March 2021

Hillcrest Road, Dudley,
West Midlands DY2 7PW

Executive Headteacher:
Mr M Hinton, B.Ed. Hons, NPQH

Head of School:
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Dear Parents and Carers,

We are really looking forward to welcoming you back to school on Monday 8th March!

We can't begin to tell you how happy we are that the whole school will soon be back together and this letter hopefully gives you all the information you need to make the return to school as smooth as possible.

Attendance at school is mandatory from Monday 8th March 2021 as per HM Government



Unless your child has a letter from their GP or NHS England to say they need to shield because they are clinically extremely vulnerable, please note that all children must attend school as normal. The normal attendance procedures will be in place and persistent absence will be reported to the Education Investigation

Service. Persistent Unauthorised absence can lead to your child being taken 'off roll' as well as penalties for parents. Our attendance consultant is here to help you if you have any difficulties and you can contact her through the school office, her name is Mrs Emma O'Sullivan.

It's really important that everyone continues to be extra careful as the virus is still present and the new variants spread much more easily than the first one

This newsletter contains lots of safety information that we really need you to follow in order to keep yourselves, your children and other people as safe as possible. Please read everything carefully and please follow the simple safety guidance that exists to keep all of us as safe as possible.

Thank you very much for your support.



Parents and Carers - please wear a face covering at all times when on the school site, calling at the office and when you are around school

Please wear a face covering at all times when you are at the school. This guidance from the local authority remains very much in place and we really appreciate your cooperation.



Staggered start times to facilitate social distancing will continue

Just like in the Autumn Term, we need to stagger the start and finish times of the classes so that we don't have high numbers of children and adults on the playground at any one time. The start and finish times remain the same as they were in the autumn term, as below:

Year Group	Start Time	Finish Time
Reception	9.15am	3.15pm
Year 1	9am	3pm
Year 2	8.45am	2.45pm
Year 3	8.45am	2.45pm
Year 4	9am	3pm
Year 5	8.30am	2.30pm
Year 6	9.15am	3.15pm

If you have more than one child in our school – we are changing drop off and pick up arrangements to help you

If you have more than one child in school you can drop them all off at the **earliest start time** and you can pick them all up at the **latest finish time**. We have reviewed our staffing arrangements and rotas and this means we can safely look after the small number of children who need to come into school early and stay a little later to wait for their siblings in other classes.

Please note these arrangements can only be provided if you have more than one child in school in order to help you as parents and save children from missing learning by arriving late / leaving early with siblings. If you have one child with us – they are already receiving their full teaching time allocation by starting and finishing with their whole class.



For example, if you have a child in Reception class and a child in Year 5: you can drop both children off at 8.30am (the start time of your Year 5 child) and you can pick them both up at 3.15pm (the finish time of your Reception child).



School meals

From Monday 8th March we will be offering our full hot meals catering provision and a menu is enclosed, we will be starting from **week 1**. Key Stage 2 children will have all meals served in take away boxes and will eat their food in their own classrooms. Reception and Key Stage 1 children, who are all entitled to a free school meal every day, will go into the hall or dinner hall and be socially distanced within their bubbles for lunch. For those that pay for school meals, the cost is **£2.40** per day and this should be paid on Schoolcomms in advance.



Enhanced hygiene and safety procedures

All of the procedures that were put in place last term remain in place for the Spring return to school. Full details can be found on our risk assessment which you can find on our website. Please note the risk assessment is being updated for March 8th so the most up to date version will be available from Monday 1st March. Our safety and hygiene procedures include:

- Keeping the children as separate class bubbles, with separate playtimes and lunchtimes and staggered starts and finishes. Children do not mix with children from other classes.
- There is very regular handwashing for children and staff throughout the day, as well as regular hand sanitising. All children and staff sanitise or wash their hands upon arrival and then regularly throughout the day.
- Enhanced hygiene procedures – our cleaners are on site all day carrying out extra cleaning of touch points and toilets throughout the day.
- Children's desks are regularly disinfected during the day
- Class equipment is disinfected at the end of the day
- Children have their own personal equipment such as their own pens, pencils and rulers that they do not share.
- Shared equipment such as dictionaries and maths equipment are only used by the class. Any equipment that is shared between classes is disinfected between uses or is quarantined for 48 hours (72 hours for plastics).
- Children sit facing the front of the classroom, as opposed to facing each other. The children continue to share desks exactly the same as in the Autumn Term.
- Classrooms are ventilated by opening windows – they are also sufficiently heated. Extra ventilation is facilitated by opening doors and windows whilst the children are out at play.
- The school complies fully with Dudley Public Health, Public Health England and NHS Test and Trace requirements and instructions.
- Full details of our procedures can be found in the risk assessment that has been updated for the return to school on Monday 8th March 2021.



Procedures for limiting the spread of the virus. What to do if your child has one or more of the three 'main' Covid-19 symptoms

If your child has one or more of the main symptoms:

- **High temperature**
- **New, continuous cough**
- **Loss or change of taste or sense of smell**



Both your child and your entire household needs to self-isolate. Book a test for your child and your household needs to stay at home until the test result arrives. If your child tests positive they, along with the entire household, needs to self-isolate for 10 days – with day zero being either the day symptoms started OR if without symptoms, the day the test was taken. Day 10 is also spent in isolation until midnight at the end of day 10. If the test is negative everyone can end their isolation.



If your child develops one or more of the three main symptoms when they are at school

If your child develops any of the main symptoms whilst they are at school you will need to come and collect them immediately and book a test. Your child and your household will need to self-isolate and you will need to book a test for your child. Your child cannot return to school until they test negative, or if they test positive, until they and the household have completed the self-isolation period.

If your child has any of these wider symptoms, there is local guidance on what to do:

The information below is provided by Dudley Public Health.

Loss of Appetite	Sore Throat
Extreme Tiredness	Sneezing
Headaches	Diarrhoea (must be clear of symptoms for 48hrs before returning to school)
Joint Pain or Muscle Ache	Vomiting (must be clear of symptoms for 48hrs before returning to school)
Nausea	Runny Nose or Congestion

Individuals who have any of the three main Covid-19 symptoms (high temperature, new, continuous cough, loss or change of taste or sense of smell) must self-isolate (stay at home) immediately and book a Covid-19 test.

However, there are also a number of other, wider symptoms (see table above), which may be linked to Covid-19 infection, although these symptoms are also common in a number of other illnesses.

Dudley Council's Public Health team and the school are keen to make sure we are doing all we can to prevent any further cases and are therefore **recommending that all children and staff in education settings get a Covid-19 test as a precaution if they display any of these wider symptoms above.** Details of how to book a test are included below.

Please note that:

- If your child has any of these **wider** symptoms (apart from diarrhoea and vomiting) **they can carry on attending their education setting if they are well enough to do so** and are not already self-isolating due to being a contact of a positive case.
- If your child has tested positive for Covid-19 in the last 90 days, they should not get tested for wider symptoms. However, they must self-isolate and seek a new test if they display any of the **three main Covid-19 symptoms.**
- If the test result is positive your child and your household must self-isolate for 10 days from their symptom onset date.
- If your child is currently self-isolating as a contact and the test result is negative, they must still continue their 10-day isolation period.
- If the test result is negative but your child then develops a high temperature, new, continuous cough or loss or change of taste or sense of smell they (and your household) must self-isolate and you must arrange another test for your child.

The Council's Public Health Team believes that this approach will help reduce transmission in the school and help maintain your child's education.

The national testing centres across the Borough have good availability and tests can be booked through the [NHS website](#) or NHS Test & Trace App. When booking a test, you will need to select "My local council or health protection team has asked me to get a test, even though I do not have symptoms", if your child does not have one of the three main symptoms.

Please remember that even if your child tests negative now, should they develop a high temperature, new, continuous cough or loss or change of taste or sense of smell the household must self-isolate and your child will need to be retested. If your child tests positive, they must isolate for 10 days and your household must also isolate for 10 days.

We hope you understand that this new measure is important to keep your family, the school and your local community safe.



If your child develops one of the wider symptoms whilst they are at school

If your child develops one or more of the wider symptoms we will contact you and recommend booking a test in line with the Dudley Public Health advice above. So long as they are well enough to stay at school they can do so and they can continue attending school unless the test comes back as negative.

What happens if there is a positive case in your child's class bubble

If there is a positive case in any of our class bubbles it will most likely be the case that all children and staff will be contacts of the positive case. Everyone will need to self-isolate for 10 days from the point of contact with the individual who has tested positive. During this time your child's teacher will provide daily live lessons from their own home via Microsoft Teams – just as we have done during the lockdown. If your child's teacher is unwell and unable to teach – we will provide work via Microsoft Teams and the daily email. Your child's teaching assistant will call you and your child throughout the isolation period.

Please note that if your child is a contact of a positive case at school – you and your household do not need to self-isolate – only the child who has been in contact with the positive case needs to stay at home.



If your child is clinically extremely vulnerable and is shielding

Please provide our attendance consultant, Mrs Emma O'Sullivan, with a copy of the letter from your GP or NHS England that identifies your child as clinically extremely vulnerable. The school will provide remote education for your child through work packs, online activities and phone calls to speak to you and your child.

It would be very wise to make a plan for what to do if your child's class bubble has to isolate

The virus is still present and the new variants spread much more easily. It's possible that we will have positive cases in school and bubbles will need to self-isolate. Even though we are coming back to school – it's clear the virus will still present issues going forward. We recommend having a backup plan in place in case your child has to self-isolate because if a positive case is identified, the children will have to go at home and / or stay at home with immediate effect.

School Uniform and Shoes

Children should return to school in their full school uniform. We do realise that your child may have outgrown items of uniform or their school shoes and that the shops are still closed! This is particularly difficult with shoes that we know need to be fitted. If you have any temporary difficulties with full uniform please let us know and we will let your child's teacher know. Once shops are fully reopened and we come back to school after Easter, we would expect the children to be in their normal school uniform.



A newsletter will be coming out very soon after the children have returned to school!

This letter is all about coming back to school and we didn't want to overload you with information about the curriculum, things that are happening and all of our plans for the special season of Lent. This will all follow as soon as the children come back to school in a separate newsletter.

Thank you for your support

Thank you very much for your support during the lockdown period. Thank you for your kind messages and calls. We really appreciate your support and we are glad to have been able to offer daily live lessons for the children. As Executive Head of School I am very grateful to you as parents and carers for all of your support and I am very grateful to the teachers and teaching assistants who have worked hard to make our remote learning provision such a success. Nothing replaces the school being open and having the children with us though – and you can be assured they will be welcomed back very warmly and we are really looking forward to seeing you all. I'll be in touch again with a detailed newsletter once the children are all back in school.



With every kind wish as always,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S Chapman".

Mrs S Chapman

Executive Head of School

JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL