

St. Mary's

Church of England Primary School

Kirkby Lonsdale

Previous letter: <https://tinyurl.com/y6ttfkgf>

Dear Parents

After the period of lockdown and home learning, I hope that you have in some way, the children have had a good break and an enjoyable summer. Like in any other year, starting school can be exciting and daunting. Having a positive outlook is very important. Being part of buying uniform, new shoes, stationary etc. packing your own bag or book bag all help. If you are new to school or worried, having a trial run, trialling walking to school can definitely help. We hope the video links in past letters have helped in welcoming you to our school. If you have not seen these please see the links below. I would like to especially welcome any new children and families who are starting school for the first time at St Mary's.

Nursery	https://youtu.be/A-ylJ8umy0k	https://youtu.be/TfdKEPiZjQ
Reception	https://youtu.be/2724maYskOM	https://youtu.be/znDwtXKioio
Year 1	https://youtu.be/1EoDGfuUJy4	
Year 2	https://youtu.be/BO4qveMGDL4	
Year 3	https://youtu.be/Nd3 AlzxVwA	
Year 4	https://youtu.be/h8dvrDF1OzU	
Year 5	https://youtu.be/MV205Nw2I7E	
Year 6	https://youtu.be/l2CVxiarCfw	

I am mindful that we are continuing to reduce the number of parents on the school site and that we are asking parents to communicate more on the phone and email to reduce adults in the building. We hope to continue to be welcoming and supportive; schools should be about the community and the relationship with parents and school makes for a positive experience for the children. Apologies if in limiting access this seems a little distant – it is not quite how we would like to be, but I am sure you appreciate the need for this.

As a school we receive local information about the 'r' rate and Cumbria infection rates for COVID-19. I am, at the time of writing this, satisfied that the infection rate is low and we are not currently in an area of concern, intervention or support. With this in mind, we plan to open as normal, on Wednesday 2nd Sept.

Please be aware that as a community we should all be ensuring social distancing. Perhaps, this may have been reduced slightly over the summer period for some families. It is important to keep the whole community safe, that we continue to follow Government guidelines.

The following information in the letter reiterates and hopefully adds, meat to the bones, of the previous information sent out at the end of term.

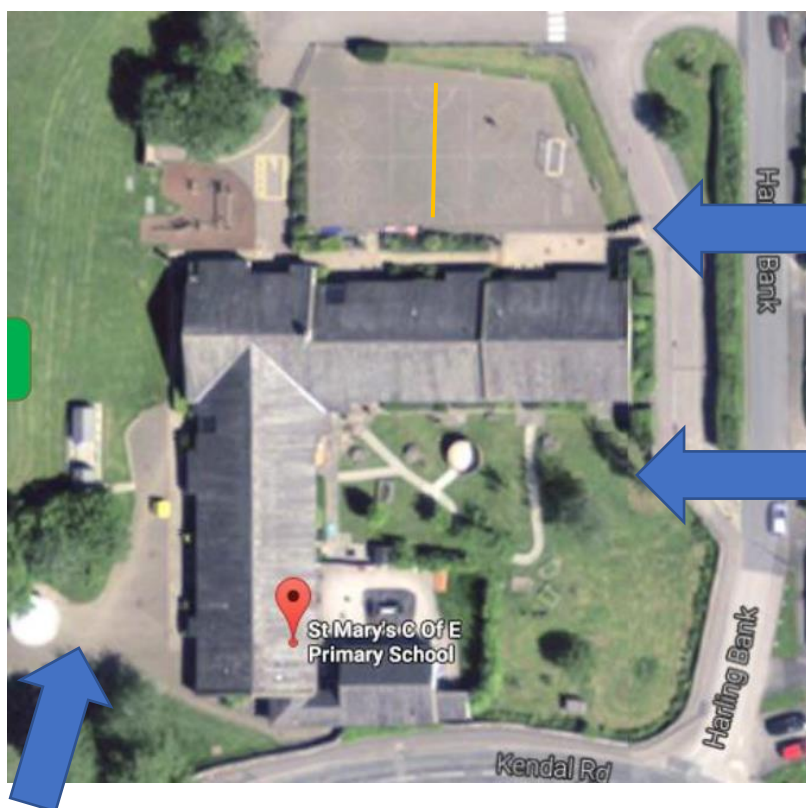
Arriving at School

To minimise adults on the premises and to enable adults to adhere to social distancing, we are asking families to use different ways of arriving as they would normally do. Could I please ask you to inform any relatives picking children up about these systems to avoid relatives roaming the school searching for the children.

We have also provided four outdoor sinks which children will be asked to use on arrival (before lining up for the start of the day). These will have soap dispensers. Please ensure children are in a good habit of washing at home. Please begin the day by encouraging children to do this.

Where should children be dropped off?

Polite parental notice – please do not loiter near the gates, entrances or paths to ensure we have good social distancing and easy access for the children to come into school.



Year 3-6 parents please drop off at the junior yard steps and children will be divided on the junior yard on arrival.

Year 1 and 2 parents please use the school garden via the garden gate. Social distance in the garden.

Parents in Nursery and Reception Classes (EYFS) please drop off at the class doors only via the infant yard gate opposite QES. (please don't use the school drive or junior yard). Social distance on the yard whilst waiting.

School Transport

Any children using the school transport will have received a letter from Cumbria County Council about their procedures. Please note we will receive the infants and EYFS children into school via the main entrance and direct them to the appropriate yard/garden if they come off the school bus. Any children using a face covering/mask should have a sealable plastic bag to store their mask. (this applies to any child choosing to use a mask en-route to school)

Breakfast and After School Club

Please note that the same system will be in operation as normal. Dropping off will be via the hall door. Please note that if there is a queue on arrival to wait patiently and socially distancing. Parents will not be invited into the hall as usual when collecting or dropping off their children. Children will be asked to wash hands and sanitise on arrival and before starting the normal school day.

School Uniform

You will be aware that until further notice, children on PE days will come in smart PE kit. We have made arrangements to subsidise hoodies to ensure the children are wearing the same clothing (Juniors). The ordering

was detailed in the previous letter. This subsidy will end soon. Staff will inform you of the PE days in a welcome letter. Assume it is not PE on the first day back.

School uniform ordering: <https://tinyurl.com/y2gm7eb8>

Class arrangements

I am sure teachers will inform you of the routines of the week. However, you will be aware that children will be in bubbles (see previous letter). During the day, children will not socially distance in their bubble but we will put various measures in place. The main changes will be that children in Y1-6 will not be facing each other in class – we have arranged tables to face forwards, as required. We will wash hands regularly. (Please ensure children are in a good routine with this at home). Children will have their own equipment e.g. whiteboards etc. Additional cleaning will be in place throughout the day throughout school.

We have agreed to adjust our curriculum so that the first term will focus on local studies or subjects without residential visits. (juniors) We are likely to make planned, local visits into Kirkby Lonsdale etc. but this will take place later in the term. We know the benefits of residential visits and day trips to support our curriculum however, we are unable to plan/confirm details of these at the present time.

In nursery and reception classes, the children will wash hands regularly and surfaces and equipment will be cleaned regularly. No social distancing with other children will be expected. Staff are likely to be mindful of social distancing and all staff have PPE available. We have asked parents in recent communications, to make every effort to toilet train their children.

All classes will also try to facilitate learning in the outdoors as we are used to doing. Please ensure children do have a waterproof so that the children can go outside even if the weather is inclement – we are in Cumbria and it will rain.

Keeping on top with learning and assessing learning.

You will be aware that we have provided pupils in the Juniors and Year 2 before the end of term, with some links to ‘Doodle English and Maths’ to enable pupils to keep on top of their learning should they wish to. We will be using this application throughout the year so the children may want to access this in the last week of the holidays to become familiar with logging in. Children in KS2 will also have access to times tables rockstars.

Although we have not had confirmation about funding and access to tutoring, we will be participating in providing some children with additional support who have significant learning gaps as a result of possible lockdown disengagement with learning. We keep in touch with families if this is to be arranged.

All PUPILS – Writing example

We have asked all children to bring in a story written by themselves to school on the first day. This will act as an exemplar baseline piece of work to start the year. As we have not been able to see pupils’ independent writing, this will prove to be a good baseline to celebrate where the children are with creative writing. It would be lovely to see what mark making the younger children can do including telling stories perhaps, through drawings.

Please note – this does not include anyone coming to school in EYFS (Reception and Nursery).

Mental Well Being

Following training last term, staff will be supporting children as part of the curriculum to help their transition to returning to school and processing the past few months. At various levels, using the appropriate language and resources from EYFS to Y6 children will be part of a series of sessions linked to **S.U.M.O.** This is Stop Understand Move On.

We will be working on the following:

- Giving children a space to talk, listen and understand different perspectives
- Avoiding Negative News – Focusing on Positive News Stories
- Managing change
- Looking at resilience, thinking about experiencing the same event but with different reactions
- Looking at how our responses to events impact on outcomes
- Exploring what we worry about
- Strategies to move on from experiences
- Exploring social skills e.g. listening, empathy, communication, negotiation and cooperation.

We will of course be applying these approaches in children friendly terms through various stories and discussion time.

We are pleased that our school counsellor will also be available each week to support children who may require additional support, responding to various needs and issues that arise.

School Lunches – please book these with the children to prepare them for the start of school

Please remember to logon to your school meals account and order school meals in good time. This will ensure lunches run smoothly. The school office will be available via email or telephone to support you if you are having any difficulties in September. Packed lunches may be served in the first three days, then the menu will be adhered to after that. All meals will now be eaten in classrooms, at desks until further notice to maintain school bubbles.

Being ready for localised incidents of Covid-19 infections

In government notifications, it is clear that we must all be ready for incidents to occur and that this could happen to any community. There are procedures in place should infection occur within our community, school staff or children. This could involve in extreme conditions, localised lockdown, or perhaps isolating classes/bubbles, lockdown of the school etc. Please be reassured we will keep you informed should this occur. Do keep in touch if you have symptoms or test positive. Public Health, the Local Authority and the Environment Agency will liaise with us also, should an outbreak of infections occur. We will always communicate with you via the school email and text service or directly.

Please do ensure that those eligible in your family for flu vaccinations also respond to these according to advice from your GP this winter.

Volunteering

We have always valued those who volunteer in school in various capacities offering their time and energy to help our children. Unfortunately, we are unable to accept your offers at this time, this will include QES placements and offers from family members. We hope this will change very soon but until then, we will have to limit those involved in school. Thank you for your understanding.

Early feedback

We will be making every effort to understand where your children are academically and emotionally in the first 30 days and we will be holding earlier than normal parent consultation sessions at the end of September. This will give us an opportunity to share our understanding of your child including their learning and any gaps following Covid-19 lockdown. We are currently working on what this will look like using the various forms of digital technology and communication available, as we will be unable to hold face to face consultations. We will get in touch nearer the time.

Change of details/personal information

If your details have changed over the summer break, please keep us informed. We are keen to begin the term ensuring everyone's contact information is accurate as we move to a period of time where quick and clear communication is essential.

If you qualify for free school meals – please complete the form following this link asap.

<https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/childrensservices/schoolsandlearning/freeschoolmeals.asp>

Wearing face masks

We are mindful that the Government has said that,

'Wearing a face covering or face mask in schools or other education settings is not recommended. Face coverings may be beneficial for short periods indoors where there is a risk of close social contact with people you do not usually meet and where social distancing and other measures cannot be maintained, for example on public transport or in some shops. This does not apply to schools or other education settings. Schools and other education or childcare settings should therefore not require staff, children and learners to wear face coverings.'

With this in mind, we would ask that adult visitors coming to the office (where absolutely necessary) should wear masks. As staff, we will not typically wear masks whilst teaching or working in school, as suggested. There may be times when we may wear masks whilst supporting a child requiring intimate care or who is symptomatic with potential C-19.

We are all looking forward to welcoming you back to school.

Yours sincerely,



Brian Jones

Headteacher