



St Catherine's Catholic Primary School

Highdown Drive, Littlehampton, West Sussex BN17 6HL

Tel: 01903 716039 Fax: 01903 722521

Website: www.st-catherines.w-sussex.sch.uk

Email: office@st-catherines.w-sussex.sch.uk

15 July 2020

Dear Families of St. Catherine's,

I am sure that you are all aware of the government's decision to re- open schools fully in September. The news has been received with mixed feelings across the country. We are receiving long and detailed guidance about how we can ensure that we do all we can to keep the children and staff safe by minimising the risk of spreading infection.

Whilst I cannot guarantee a completely risk-free environment, I can promise that we will follow the set guidelines to the letter and this will reduce any risk of infection to an absolute minimum.

School life will be quite different for children, parents and staff as we all need to make ourselves aware of the new rules and abide by them at all times. At this point, I have summarised the main changes which will be implemented from September 2020. Please read them carefully and contact the school if you have any questions at all.

1. **SOCIAL DISTANCING:** The Government both recognises and accepts this as a very difficult measure to enforce in Primary schools. In order to minimise social contact, children will work in their classroom, eat in their classroom and have playtimes with the children in their class only. There will be no mixing of classes during the school day. Children from Y1-Y6 will sit side by side on a table facing forwards. Teachers and Teaching Assistants are allowed to move between groups and classrooms whilst maintaining a social distance where possible and following the rules about sanitisation.
2. **EQUIPMENT:** The government advises that regularly used equipment is not to be shared. We will give every child (Y1-Y6) their own plastic wallet in which will be the basic equipment needed for daily use - ie: pencil, pen, eraser, ruler and tissues. Other equipment which necessitates sharing will be sanitised after use on a regular basis. Children can bring a bag to school in which to carry lunch, snacks and a drink but **no other items should be brought into school.**
3. **TIMINGS OF THE SCHOOL DAY:** the Government advises that start and finish times are staggered to avoid cross over/mixing of year groups and 'learning bubbles'. Playtimes and lunchtimes will also be staggered according to the guidance set for schools. wAs this is the area which may cause most difficulties we have tried to minimise any time you should need to be waiting around. It is imperative that timings are adhered to closely as follows:

YEAR GROUP	ENTRANCE POINT	TIMINGS OF DAY
R	CAR PARK	8.30 - 2.50
6	PLAYGROUND	8.30 - 2.50
5	CAR PARK	8.40 - 3.00
3	PLAYGROUND	8.40 - 3.00
4 (ER)	CAR PARK	8.50 - 3.10
4 (DR)	PLAYGROUND	8.50 - 3.10
1	CAR PARK	9.00 - 3.20
2	PLAYGROUND	9.00 - 3.20

School Starts on
Thursday 3 September 2020
One parent only to accompany children to and from school. Please line up outside of the school fence until a member of staff comes to let you in. Parents are not to enter the school building without an appointment unless in a real emergency.

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4. SCHOOL UNIFORM: we will return to wearing school uniform in September. This should be washed regularly in order to maintain high standards of cleanliness. PE kit should be washed after every use.

There are a few things that you can do to help us. Staff are usually able to help children who find changing their clothes and tying their laces a bit of a challenge - we will be avoiding this from September for a while in order to keep our distance - please try to practice these skills with your children over the summer holiday as it will make their lives, and ours, easier to manage. Perhaps make sure that their shoes have Velcro fastenings? If your child has any habits which may be considered 'less than hygienic' such as sucking thumbs, please try to wean them off this as we will need to minimise the risk of spreading infection.

Whilst in school, the doors and windows of all classrooms need to be open as much as possible in order to secure good ventilation - therefore, it is advisable that children have something warm to wear (such as a jumper) even when the sun is shining outside. Thank you for your cooperation in this.

5. DEALING WITH SICK CHILDREN: You may find that we are more alert to this than in normal times and you may receive more phone calls than usual. We have to be vigilant to any signs of sickness - particularly those related to COVID 19. It may be necessary to ask you to collect your child from school more often than we would normally. Please be patient with us around this issue. If your child is displaying symptoms of the virus then they will be cared for initially at school by a member staff who will wear PPE. You will be expected to come to school for immediate pick up. We may ask you to get your child tested and to stay at home until the results of the test are received. If you, or any members of your household are displaying symptoms or test positive for the virus, you must remain away from our school for the mandatory length of time. Please inform us if you have been contacted by the Track & Trace scheme as we will need to take actions to protect our school community.

Finally, there is much information here for you to read in preparation for school in September. There will be more to come, I'm sure. Please remember that we are here to help and support you throughout and you should contact us if you have any worries or concerns about school procedures and policies.

Whilst all of the above flies in the face of our 'Open Door' policy, we do have a responsibility to each other to enforce the rules and guidance from our Government. The staff at St. Catherine's are going to work hard to make school life as 'normal' as possible for the children. We have some new and exciting curriculum topics for them and, whilst trips are off the agenda at the moment, things will improve as time passes and we are all in agreement that we are eager to be with the children again after such a frustrating few months.

I wish you all a very safe, happy and relaxing summer holiday. Fingers crossed we get plenty of sunshine. Take care of your families and we look forward to seeing you all in September

With my warmest of wishes

Mrs Askham
Headteacher

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