



St Michael's Nursery and Infant School

Station Road, Workington, CA14 2UY Tel. 01900 608111

Our website address: www.smhwkt.cumbria.sch.uk

22nd May 2020

Phased Return to School – Nursery, Reception and Year 1 (Plus any pupils of Keyworkers in Year 2)

Dear Parents/Carers

Thank you to those who have responded to my letter on 15th May 2020 as to whether you would be sending your child back to school as proposed by the Government. I have had a very good response from you all and many have concerns and have rightly asked questions. We are in the very early stages of planning to reopen school to priority age groups and pupils of keyworkers. As an infant school the Government has proposed giving priority to Early Years which is Reception and Nursery then Year 1 and before the end of the Summer Term it is proposed that Year 2 will also return to school. I will try to give you some answers to help you make your decision but please understand that changes may have to be made to these initial plans as we are given more advice and guidance in this ever-changing situation.

Question 1: Is school opening on Monday 1st June?

Answer: No. School will not be ready for pupils to return on the first day of Summer 2 Half-term. We will keep you updated with a possible date for reopening and which of our age groups we will be opening for. We are planning the return to school and there are many circumstances to consider before we can say we can reopen safely for both pupils, staff and parents.

Question 2: Will my child be in their own classroom?

Answer: For there to be 2 metres social distancing around each child, the classrooms have been measured and adapted so classrooms will only be able to accommodate small numbers of pupils. For example, the Reception pupils may be in their own class, in the Read, Write, Inc room or part of the nursery unit if nursery children do not return in the first phase. At present in Year 1 there are two halves of the classroom that enable 4 pupils in each to keep to the social distancing guidance leaving others to be taught in the hall. As you can see there are many issues to contend with. So, your child may not be in their usual classroom. This is to ensure the children are kept apart and to allow staff to move around the room whilst maintaining a safe distance.

Question 3: Will my child have the class teacher they had in March?



Answer: Although we would prefer your child to have their own class teacher it may not be possible due to small groupings allowing for social distancing, plus staff who are clinically vulnerable or who live with someone who is clinically vulnerable may not be available to return to school when we reopen.

Question 4: Will my child meet up with their friends?

Answer: The children will be put into a group and then given a classroom. They will be given their own individual table that he/she will sit at each day as a work-station with a set of equipment **for their use only** throughout the day; pencils, books etc. They will not be able to sit where they wish so that the risk of infection is reduced and if a child becomes ill it is easier to identify where they have been and who with. The group they are with will stay the same every day to reduce the chance of spreading infection. Each group will be given their own time outside on the yard to play so that groups don't mix. You may be required to send a packed lunch (see question 7), snack and a water bottle each day that will be kept at their work station and they will eat their lunch at their desk.

Question 5: Will they be able to play with their friends in the playground?

Answer: The children will remain in their group for the full day and not mix with any other group either inside or on the playground. On the playground they will be given an allocated space and possibly equipment like a skipping rope, hoop etc anything which can be cleaned. They will not be allowed to play with balls or tag which would mean that they had contact with the other children on the playground. If it is wet then the children will stay in their classroom as the Hall has to be used as a classroom and will not be available.

Question 6: Will my child be expected to wear uniform?

Answer: Your child is coming to school so uniform would be expected. However, some children may have grown whilst school has been closed and if this is the case then we can provide items from lost property to help you until your next uniform order is placed or as the children are in Year 2 are leaving perhaps some items of uniform could be donated to school for the younger pupils. If your child is in Year 2, I would not expect you to buy new uniform for half a term but the children should come to school in sensible clothes something similar to their uniform or their PE kit. Please bear in mind that a clean set of clothes is required each day for every child to reduce the risk of spreading the virus.

Question 7: Will school be providing a lunch?

Answer: We are still in the planning phase but would prefer all pupils to bring their own lunch that has been prepared at home again to reduce the risk of infection.

Question 8: What work will they be doing?



Answer: They will be completing the work that teachers are putting on the school website, Purple Mash etc. The only additional work in school would be from a Mental Health and Wellbeing perspective to help them get used to the school being very different, reduce anxiety and support them in their understanding of why things have changed.

Question 9: Does my child have to come to school every day?

Answer: Yes but this may change depending on a variety of circumstances e.g. insufficient staff to cover all small groups. Obviously if your child was ill you would need to keep them at home and contact school in the normal way.

Question 10: What hygiene rules would my child be expected to follow?

Answer: As guidance states we would continue with washing hands several times throughout the day more than normal. Staff will be instructed to clean the tables etc throughout the day and will be wearing aprons, gloves and masks.

I would strongly recommend that you sit with your child and explain what school will be like so that they are prepared to come back to a very different place. We are keen to get the children back into school but must make sure it is a safe place for us all.

We are putting pictures on our website and our Facebook page for children to see how their classrooms look now to give them a further understanding of the changes that have been made.

In order to help with preparations for reopening, we need to know if you are planning to send your child back to school in June. I want to reassure you that there is no pressure on anyone to send their children back to school and the government have stated that parents **WILL NOT** be fined if they do not send their child to school but we do need to know your decision on whether your child will be returning to school in June or not so that plans can be made.

Please email me your responses admin@smhwkt.cumbria.sch.uk even if you wish to change your answer once you have read the above. Thank you for your continued support and understanding at this difficult time. We are missing you all.

Kind regards,

A Richardson

Mrs A Richardson
Headteacher

