

St Mary Magdalen's Catholic Primary School

Headteacher: Mrs Helen Frostick MA.BA. (Hons), C.C.R.S., N.P.Q.H



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Dear Parents,

I hope that this final letter of this extraordinary year finds you safe and well. I am writing to you regarding the arrangements for the start of the next academic year on 3rd September 2020, but firstly I want to take this opportunity to extend my thanks to all of our school community. When I first arrived at St Mary Magdalen's, I knew that the school was very special, as it not only strives to provide children with an outstanding academic education, but also to nurture their spiritual and emotional development, supporting them to become truly remarkable members of our community. During these unprecedented times, the pupils, parents and staff have only confirmed what a remarkable school St Mary Magdalen's is, through the enthusiasm, dedication and resilience they have shown.

I am deeply indebted to Mrs Frostick for the way she has calmly led us all through these challenging times with such clarity and compassion. She has transformed the school during her time as headteacher and watching her unending passion and drive has only confirmed to me what a privilege it is to be taking on the role of Headteacher at our school. I am sure we are all looking forward to welcoming her back next year for a proper celebration of her amazing contribution to St Mary Magdalen's.

As you will know, on Thursday 2nd July 2020 the government released new guidance for schools in preparation for September: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools> The new guidance has been issued as the decreased prevalence of the virus, the increased access and speed of testing and the growing knowledge of COVID-19 allows for changes to be made that will enable all children to return to school in September 2020.

There are a number of key changes. Most importantly, all children must return to school and receive full time education from September 2020 and we are thrilled that we will be able to have class and year group bubbles so that the school experience will be far more familiar for our pupils. Staff will be able to move between classes in order to facilitate the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum and to ensure the smooth running of the school. This includes specialist teachers who will be able to teach multiple classes within a day

We are aware that the transition back to school will be different for every child and that the curriculum may need to be adapted to reflect children's varying experiences during this period of extended absence from school. We will be adapting our provision to ensure that we meet the needs of all children including taking into account the importance of supporting their well-being and mental health. We are very grateful to the PTA for agreeing to fund a PSHE scheme of work which will work alongside the Catholic ethos of our school to ensure a happy, healthy start to the new year.

All of these changes will take place whilst the school also endeavours to ensure the safety of its pupils, families and staff by reducing contacts, maximising distancing and minimising potential contamination.



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In practical terms for your family this will mean a few changes. In September, pupils will be in class or year group bubbles with very few staff moving between bubbles. We will stagger start and pick up times as follows:

Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 drop off 8.40-9.00 and pick up 3.00-3.20.
Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 drop off 9.00-9.20 and pick up 3.20-3.40.

The overlap will enable sibling groups to be dropped off and picked up together.

On arrival, children should go straight to their classrooms and we will send details of where they should enter the school and where they should be collected before the start of term. Parents will not be able to come into the school building without an appointment, in line with the current and new guidance. We would ask that you arrive and leave the school site promptly and maintain a 2 metre distance between yourself and others wherever possible in order to minimise the possibility of cross contamination. Lunchtimes and breaktimes will also be staggered in order to minimise contact between bubbles.

We will also be minimising the use of communal spaces and ensuring that they are cleaned between uses, as well as continuing to clean our school thoroughly each day. We will be allocating equipment and resources to bubbles to help minimise the use of communal resources and we will clean and quarantine resources, such as reading books that have to be shared. We would ask that pupils in Y1-6 bring their own stationery to school named, and in a pencil case (a list is attached to this email). This will avoid the confusion caused by all children having identical equipment provided by the school and minimise the possibility of potential contamination. If you are not able to provide this equipment, the school will be able to. Please do not hesitate to let us know if this is the case in confidence via the school office.

Current government guidance does not allow for overnight residential trips to take place but we hope for our Year 5 and Year 6 trips to take place in the spring term if the guidance has been relaxed by then. We will not be running after school clubs in the autumn term as we will continue to minimise visitors to our site and the need to prevent bubbles of children mixing will also make them unviable. We have arranged an alternative provision with Mortlake Hall for those requiring child care for a short time at the end of the day. They will collect your child from our school at 3.20pm and you can then collect them from Mortlake Hall at 4.30pm. Please see their website on how to book a place; the cost will be £5.50 per child for the hour, additional times are available also. <http://mortlakehall.co.uk/after-school-club/>

We will be running our Breakfast Club, but this must now be booked in advance via SCOPay, so that the appropriate arrangements can be made to ensure distancing between pupils from different bubbles. We are asking all parents to pre-book their child's place via SCOPay. You will need to purchase the number of mornings you will need and then go to your basket to make your purchase, the cost will remain the same £4 per session (this includes cereal, juice and toast). If you have any Breakfast Club Vouchers left over, please email s.barrett@st-marymagdalens.richmond.sch.uk with the Voucher Code and the days you would like to book.

Thank you in advance for all your help and support with these new arrangements. I am so grateful for all that you have done over these past few months to support our pupils, our staff and our community whilst also juggling so many responsibilities of your own.

I hope that you will be able to enjoy some well-earned rest and relaxation over the summer and I look forward to welcoming you and your children back to school in September.

Yours sincerely,

Catherine Hughes
Deputy Headteacher



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