

St. John's Upper Holloway C.E. Primary School

Pemberton Gardens, London N19 5RR

Telephone: 020 7272 2780 - Fax: 020 7561 1692

Head Teacher: Mr Brian Welsh

Email info@st-johnsholloway.islington.sch.uk

Website www.stjohnsupperholloway.co.uk

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Dear Parents

As we are coming towards the last couple of weeks of the summer holidays, I just wanted to send you a quick letter to provide a little update on the school reopening for children next month.

In our end of year newsletter, we explained that the local authority has allowed schools to have an additional day to prepare for pupils returning in September and the first day children will be in school is therefore **Monday 7th September**. A few parents have noticed that the term dates on our school website still says children start back on Friday 4th September. In July, a new company took over the maintenance of our school website and there have been a few technical issues with updating pages so please do not rely on the website for current information. We will try to resolve this as soon as we can and will let you know when everything is back up to date.

Although Covid is still with us, the government and local authority are planning for all pupils to return to school during the Autumn term and it is only if there are local 'spikes' in the number of outbreaks that schools may need to close. There is a zoom meeting for all heads this week to review the current situation and to ensure we are all providing as safe an environment for children and staff as possible. We will try to ensure we keep children and staff in their class 'bubbles' as much as possible throughout the day but recognise that especially for younger children, we will not be able to keep them socially distanced.

Some of the key information for you is:

- ✓ Children should not come to school if they have any symptoms of covid (dry, persistent cough, high temperature, lack of sense of taste) and must be taken for a covid test. If the test is positive, they need to self isolate for 10 days from when the symptoms started and other members in the household also self isolate for 14 days. Children should not return until all symptoms have gone.
- ✓ School will continue to have a programme of hygiene and cleaning for all pupils and staff including regular handwashing and increased cleaning of school premises and resources
- ✓ The school day will start and end at the normal time (9:00am –3:30pm for Years 1 to 6 and 9:00-3:20pm for Nursery and Reception classes). However, we are



introducing a 'soft start' and children may enter their classrooms from 8:45am if they have arrived early and a member of staff is in the classroom. We hope this will reduce the number of children and adults standing/queueing in the playground.

- ✓ Entrances—We are asking Early Years children to continue using their entrance to and from the classrooms. Children in Years 1, 2 and 3 should use the side entrance to come into the playground and wait to enter their classrooms. Children in Years 4, 5 and 6 should use the rear gate to come straight into their classrooms. ***It is important that pupils do not play and mix with children in other year groups in the playground but go straight into class or straight home with parents.***
- ✓ Breakfast and Buzz club—although many schools will not be providing extended school provision, we understand how important this is for parents and are exploring ways in which we can offer this whilst still minimising risk of transmission between age groups. We will not be able to offer it in the first week back at school but will shortly be sending out a survey to get an indication of how many parents require this service and will then explore how we can organise it safely.
- ✓ School uniform—we will be asking parents to ensure all pupils are wearing correct school uniform from September. This can be bought online through M&S at mandsyouruniform.com—remember there is a 20% discount for all items bought up to September. Please make sure all items of clothing are named!
- ✓ Curriculum—we understand that children may be quite traumatised by their experience during the pandemic and we will be focusing on supporting pupils' mental health and wellbeing, particularly in the first few weeks of school. We will also be assessing all pupils during September to gain a clear picture of what gaps they have in their learning, and will be meeting with parents at the end of September to discuss how we can work together to help our children make excellent progress.

I understand that for many pupils (and parents) the return to school after such a long break may cause a great deal of anxiety. However, we know from those children who returned to school last term, the huge benefits of being back with their friends and having a daily routine based on learning and self esteem. If you do have any questions you would like to ask us before your child returns, please do call the school office from Wednesday 2nd September and we will do our best to answer as fully as we can.

We very much look forward to seeing everyone on Monday 7th September.

Mr Welsh and all the staff at St John's

