

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

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2nd September 2020

Dear Parents

As children are due to return to school from next **Monday, 7th September**, I just wanted to send you a quick letter with some guidance and updates to help you prepare.

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 was a zoom meeting for all head teachers in Islington last week to review the current situation and to ensure we are all providing as safe an environment for children and staff as possible. The good news is that the number of cases of covid in Islington is the lowest across London at around 4 cases per 100,000 people, however we do not want to be complacent. 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 at all times.

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 inform the school and 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 hand washing and increased cleaning of school premises and resources.
- ✓ As the drinking fountains cannot be used by pupils, we are asking that all children are **provided with a named water bottle**, preferably re-usable. These will be kept in the classroom.
- ✓ 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. For pupils in Early Years and Years 1 and 2, if they arrive after 9:05, parents will be asked to wait with their children until 9:30.



- ✓ **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. ***It is important that pupils do not play and mix with children in other year groups in the playground but go straight into class.***
Children in Years 4, 5 and 6 should use the rear gate on St John's Grove to come straight into their classrooms and we ask that parents of these children leave their children at the gate rather than come on to school premises. At home time, parents will need to come to the rear of the Years 4, 5 and 6 classrooms to collect their children. ***As there will be quite a large number of adults waiting outside these classrooms, we are asking that parents wear a mask to collect their child at home time.***

- ✓ **Breakfast and Buzz club**—although many schools will not be providing extended school provision, we understand how important this is for parents. We have sent out an online survey (Survey Monkey) for parents to complete so that we have a clear indication of the demand for breakfast and Buzz Club places and can then start to plan the provision. **The deadline for completing the survey is this Friday (4th Sept)** and if parents have not requested a place at either club, we may not be able to offer a place to your child. If you want to complete the survey to request a place but cannot find the link, please contact the school office and they will re-send it. We hope to confirm the details of what we can offer by Tuesday 8th September with a view to starting the clubs by Monday 14th September.

- ✓ **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. Please make sure all items of clothing are named! Any un-named items that are left in school will need to be thrown away. On the days when your child has PE, we have agreed that they can come to school in their PE kit and wear it for that day. Obviously if the weather is cold, they will need to have a warm school sweatshirt or cardigan to put on top of their PE t-shirt and blue jogging bottoms. The office will send out a separate reminder to clarify what our school uniform includes (and does not!).

- ✓ **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. As part of this focus, we are asking children to think about some of the things in their life that makes them happy – it may be family, a holiday, friends, favourite toy etc. Teachers will then ask them to **send a picture of these things to them using see-saw** and we can create a display in class that can be a focus of discussion during the first week. Please look out for further information about this from your child's teacher. 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.



- ✓ Snacks in Years 3 to 6 – we know for many children it may seem like a long morning without a snack. We are therefore encouraging parents to send their child with a piece of fresh fruit that they can eat mid-morning. By restricting it to fruit, it will ensure no children bring in snacks that may contain nuts or other allergens.

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

