

Friday 26th February 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

We hope this letter finds you well. The Prime Minister has now set out his 'roadmap' for the return to schools and easing of lockdown restrictions. As such, we are now in a position to inform you of our plans to welcome the children back to St Paul's on Monday March 8th.

Change to the "Bubbles"

While the guidance remains that schools are expected to maintain distinct bubbles (as per the Autumn term), we have made the decision to change the way we organise our groups to ensure that we are able to continue to provide the highest quality of teaching and learning and to make sure that the children's social needs are met. As such, we will be having 3 distinct 'bubbles' – Phase 1, Phase 2 and Phase 3.

Key Workers: Each child will have a 'key' teacher. This will be their 'house' teacher from the Autumn term and remain your first point of contact. This teacher will be responsible for meeting/greeting and your child's overall development.

Learning Groups: The children in the phase will be grouped for their learning to ensure that the pitch of the learning is right for them. They may be with different teachers and/or children from within their bubble.

Why have we decided to change the "Bubble" structure?

While rates of COVID-19 were at their highest, it was important for us to ensure that we established a risk assessment that kept family groupings together while we monitored the risks in a small school. The DfE guidance released for the March 8th reopening states clearly that 'siblings do not need to be in the same bubble' and with a year of monitoring how our risk measures work, we are confident that we can make changes to the system without unnecessarily increasing the risk of the virus spreading.

We have a clear rationale of why we feel that it is important to revert to a phase model at St Paul's:

- **teaching and learning will meet children's needs more effectively** because we will be able to provide targeted teaching to the children in smaller groups, as we have done remotely in lockdown. The evidence is that this leads to better outcomes for our children.
- **it will improve children's social skills and well-being** because they will be able to see their friends from the same phase at playtimes and lunchtimes.
- **it will ensure a better contingency for any further COVID-related disruption** as remote learning is already well established and embedded to be delivered in Phases.
- **It will provide the children with a sense of "normality"** by increasing the flexibility to return the school to usual practice in line with lockdown easing e.g. introduction of extra-curricular clubs, phased assemblies, trips and visits etc.

How will we ensure that the children and staff are kept safe from Covid-19?

We have revised our risk assessment to incorporate bubbling in phases and will ensure that many of the same practices are kept in place to reduce the risk of virus transmission, including:

- Keeping staff consistent within a bubble (staff will not move between phases)
- changes made to the layout of the building to keep bubbles apart e.g. one-way system
- ensuring good hand hygiene and cleanliness
- staggered start and finish times (see below)
- staff and parents will be required to wear face coverings in communal areas
- **School will remain closed for all pupils on a Wednesday afternoon to accommodate enhanced cleaning**

In addition, school staff will be undertaking COVID-19 testing twice weekly.

What will happen to drop off and collection times?

The children will continue to be dropped off and collected in their **house** groups at the same times as before Christmas. However, **it is vital that the children do not mix between phases at drop off/pick up times and so we will be adding an extra gate (between Phase 1 entrance and Main Playground) for drop/off and collections.** Two members of staff will be on gate duty to help ensure that the children (and you) are at the right place. Please see below for further details:

HOUSE	Phase	GATE	DROP OFF AM	COLLECTION (Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri)	COLLECTION (Wed only)
Air	Phase 2	2	8.30 – 8.40am	2.40 – 2.50pm	1.00 – 1.10pm
Earth	Phase 1	1	8.50 – 9.00am	3.00 – 3.10pm	1.20 – 1.30pm
	Phase 2	2			
	Phase 3	3			
Water	Phase 1	1	9.10 – 9.20am	3.20 – 3.30pm	1.40 – 1.50pm
	Phase 2	3			
	Phase 3	2			

Gate Details (when viewing school from the front)

- Gate 1 To the left hand side of school, walking up the side of school and entering school through the Phase 1 classroom external doors
- Gate 2 The middle, single gate, walking up the secured area and entering school through the Phase 2 Air (formerly Year 2) external door
- Gate 3 To the right hand side of school into the playground and entering school through the playground door

Uniform:

There will be no change to the expectations for uniform. Children will continue to wear their house colours. Judging by our own children, we are sure that the children will have grown during lockdown and we appreciate that you may not be able to get out and replace uniform. As long as they are wearing something that resembles uniform (same coloured trousers etc), please don't worry if it is on the tight side or if the children are wearing trainers for the time being!

Breakfast & Lunches

Due to staffing constraints and a lack of demand during the last academic year, we will not be operating a paid breakfast club for the rest of this academic year. This will be reviewed for September.

We will be continuing to provide all pupils with a free breakfast on arrival at school.

From 8th March, Phase 1 will return to the Dining Hall to eat their lunch (no lunchboxes for Phase 1 or Year 2 please) and we will continue to provide hot meals to those pupils in Y3 upwards who are entitled to free school meals. All other pupils will be required to bring a packed lunch.

However, from Easter, we intend to return to providing hot meals for any other parents that wish to purchase them.

Laptops and Kindles

We are determined to make sure that the children carry on building upon the ICT skills that they have developed from using technology in lockdown. If you have a school laptop, please make sure that it is returned to school on 8th March. Similarly, please make sure that all Kindles are charged and brought to school ready for use...start as we mean to go on!

INSET Day – Friday 5th March

Please note that in order to get school ready for a return of all pupils, next Friday (5th March) will be an INSET day. There will be no remote learning and school will be closed for all pupils (including those attending school as part of key worker provision). There will no longer be an INSET day on Friday 2nd July.

Finally, but by no means last, THANK YOU! Thank you once again for your hard work and commitment to supporting your children over the last two months. You have done an amazing job and we are so grateful and humbled to have been welcomed in to your homes to ensure that our children have kept on learning.

We know that it cannot have been easy to juggle working/parenting and being a teacher.

We hope that you have learnt from this experience what a positive influence you can make on your child's learning, and we absolutely want to make sure that your support at home will continue, but please do make sure that you take some time to rest and recover...the Easter holidays will be upon you soon! ☺

With very best wishes,

Mrs Matthews
Headteacher

Mrs Bevan
Co-Headteacher