



St Mary's Catholic Primary Academy

A Community where we Live, Learn and Laugh Together in God's Love



Swires Rd, Halifax, West Yorkshire, HX1 2ER
Website: www.stmaryshalifax.co.uk
Email: admin@st-marys-halifax.calderdale.sch.uk

Telephone: 01422 362365
Headteacher: Miss J Smith
Chair of Governors: Mr D Hymas

23rd August 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians,

RETURNING TO SCHOOL – SEPTEMBER 2021

I am delighted and honoured to be appointed as the new Headteacher for St Mary's Catholic Primary Academy, and I'm very keen to get to know parents, as well as pupils and staff. From my experience of being in education, I know that a successful and happy school depends on all of us working together. St Mary's has a history of providing their pupils with an excellent quality of education, whilst letting the children's gifts and talents shine through. After the difficulties we have all faced over the past 18 months, I am really looking forward to embracing a bit more normality and I am looking forward to finding out more about the school so that any changes we make in this new chapter are supported by the whole school community.

School will re-open on Wednesday 8th September, and we look forward to welcoming all of our pupils back to school, including our new Reception pupils who will start on individually allocated days soon afterwards.

Due to the changes in the Government and DfE guidance, I wanted to make you aware of the easing of some restrictions as of September within school. This will allow you to prepare your child for what they can expect when they return in Autumn term.

Main Principles:

- We will continue to maintain robust hygiene, following a 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach, and encourage hand washing throughout the school day.
- We will continue to ensure well used areas are cleaned regularly throughout the school day.
- We will continue to ensure classrooms and areas of use around school are well ventilated and allow the free-flow of air.
- We will require anyone with symptoms (high temperature/new, continuous cough/loss or change to sense of smell or taste) to access a PCR test, and remain at home until a negative result is received. If a positive result is received, you will be required to isolate under the current government isolation expectations.

Main Changes:

- It is no longer recommended that children remain in 'bubbles', therefore assemblies and mixed breaks and lunchtimes can resume. There may be a possibility that in some local areas it may become necessary to reintroduce 'bubbles' for a temporary period, to reduce mixing between groups, depending on local infection rates, but we will follow local authority advice on this.
- If there is a positive case within your child's class, the class bubble will not close. All close contacts will be identified via NHS Track and Trace and the school are no longer expected to undertake contact tracing. NHS Track and Trace will work with the individual who has tested positive (or their parents) to identify close contacts. As of 16th August 2021 children under the age of 18 years old, and adults who are fully vaccinated will no longer be required to self-isolate

if they are contacted by NHS Test and Trace as a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case. Instead, children will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace, informed they have been in close contact with a positive case and advised to take a PCR test. We would encourage all individuals to take a PCR test if advised to do so.

- Adults in the same household as a positive case must continue to follow self-isolation guidelines and isolate for 10 days, unless they are double vaccinated, you have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial or you are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons.

- Masks are no longer advised for adults working in school. However, should any of our adults prefer to wear one then they are welcome to do so.

What happens if my child gets symptoms at school?

If a child or adult becomes symptomatic while they are in school they will be sent home. Parents will be expected to collect them as soon as possible, so that we can minimise the amount of contact the person has with other people. Whilst waiting, they will be kept in the medical room and supported by a familiar member of staff, who will take appropriate distancing and mitigation measures to protect themselves. Parents will be asked to arrange a PCR test as soon as possible and inform the school once the results come through. Once a negative result is received, please email this to the school office and then your child will be allowed to return to school. If the result is positive, NHS Track and Trace will advise you of the current isolation guidance.

What happens if someone in my child's class tests positive?

Your child will continue to stay at school. You may be contacted by NHS Track and Trace if your child has been identified as a close contact, and advised to take your child for a PCR test. School will no longer contact families about any positive cases in classes, as Track and Trace will now be responsible for contacting close contacts.

Due to the above changes, there will be some differences to the school routines which will be more in line with regular procedures that were in place before COVID19.

Start of the school day

The school day will begin at 8.55am for all children. The school gates will open at 8.45am. The children in KS1 will arrive at the KS1 gate and wait in the playground for a teacher once the bell goes. Children in KS2 will arrive at the main gate and be greeted by a member of staff and then will be able to go straight through to their classroom, where their teacher will greet them. Parents do not need to accompany KS2 children past the gate.

End of the school day

KS1 children will end the school day at 3.25pm, and can be collected by parents from the KS1 playground. KS2 children will be dismissed at 3.30pm from the playground by their class teacher as their parents arrive to collect them.

Lunchtimes

We are going to continue using both the main hall and dining room during lunchtime, as this is something that has been successful following different procedures. Reception and KS1 will continue to use the dining hall, and all of KS2 will use the main hall.

Playtimes

Playtime zoning is no longer advised, and children will be having their usual playtime at 10.45-11am, and 2.30-2.45pm for KS1.

PE lessons

All children will need to bring in the following to change into for PE; a plain white t-shirt, black shorts, or plain black jogging bottoms and sensible trainers for when the weather is cooler. The

kit should have your child's name or initials printed clearly on the label so that it can be returned to them if lost. Their PE kits can remain in school, in your child's locker.

Forest School

All classes will have Forest School sessions regularly throughout the academic year. When it is your child's day for a session you will be notified by text the day before. Please make sure you send your child in appropriate, warm and waterproof clothing.

Yellow bus

We have been informed that the C30 Bus will be running again from Wednesday 8th September, and all families who access this service have been contacted by the company directly.

Hang Out Hub

We will be re-opening our Breakfast and After-School childcare provision for 30 children per session. These places can be booked via our online booking system. Parents wanting to make use of this provision should send an email to our Office Administrator (Mrs Maseela) for more information, at admin@st-marys-halifax.calderdale.sch.uk .

I look forward to meeting you all in September and I hope you all enjoy the remainder of the summer break.

Yours Sincerely

J. Smith

Miss Smith

Headteacher