

Our Lady's Catholic Primary School

Ward Street Prescott Knowsley Merseyside L34 6JJ
Tel: 0151 477 8220 Fax: 0151 477 8221
Website: www.ourladysprescot.com
Email: ourlady@knowsley.gov.uk



Headteacher
Mr H Boyle BSc NPQH

“Loving Learning and Reaching out to All”

19th May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Firstly, I hope that you are all bearing up during these unprecedented times and that you and your families are well. Can I thank you once again for all the support you have given to your child/children with their home learning. The feedback from the teachers has been overwhelmingly positive. Also thank you for following the Government's advice to keep your child/children at home where possible.

Your patience following my DOJO message to all parents last week has been appreciated. We have been working hard to plan using DFE, LA and Union guidance for a potential re-opening after June 1st. As you know already the children are due to have a two week half term holiday from this Friday. Two of these days are INSET or staff training days that we will be using to fine tune preparations for some children coming back on June 8th. **The school will be closed to all pupils from Friday 22nd May to Monday 8th June.** Please contact the school this week if you have any difficulties with this.

The DFE Guidance is clear that school should only look to reopen for Early Years (Reception and Nursery), Year 1 and Year 6 to prepare for a possible return in June. This is conditional and may change depending on the national or local picture and dependent on the infection rate (R rate). We are now in the process of making plans to open on **Monday 8th June for some Early Years children, Year 1 and Y6 children as well as the children we already have identified as children of key workers and vulnerable children.** Certain criteria have to be fulfilled and risk assessments completed.

As a priority, we need to provide a child care facility for the children of key workers and our most vulnerable children. We will build up to 15 children in Early Years in total and build up to 15 children in our KS1 consisting of Y1 and the Y2 vulnerable children/children of key workers. Y6 will build up to 15 children using both Y5 and Y6 classrooms. The remaining children from the vulnerable children and children of key workers (Years 3, 4 and 5 only) will be using the Y3 and Y4 classrooms and will build up to 15 children across this bubble. This makes four groups in total and follows social distancing guidelines. These children will remain in the same group throughout the week and will not be able to mix with one another.

At the start of this pandemic we asked all parents to tell us if they were key workers and we formed a list. Not all of the families on this list took up the offer of childcare in school. However, children from these families as well as vulnerable children will be offered the places available in the first instance. Following this, children who receive the free school meal vouchers will be offered places. Please be mindful this service is only available if alternative child care arrangements can't be made.

We sent you a form to complete on DOJO last week asking whether or not you intended sending your child back to school before September or were as yet unsure. We still await some responses to this request. I understand that it is difficult to decide when there is so much to consider for your child's safety. **However, in order to determine whom we can offer places to we have to place a deadline on responses for Wednesday 20th May at 12 noon. Any responses still outstanding will be considered to be that you will not be sending your child back before September at the earliest.**

The Government and LA have advised that we start with the youngest children on this phased return to school. However, it should be noted that each school is unique and has to take into account staff capacity, classroom space, number of key worker and vulnerable children requiring a place. This very much dictates what each school can safely offer. The hierarchy of priority is as follows:

- Key workers and vulnerable children
- EYFS, Year 1, Year 6

We hope to be able to let you know this Friday if your child is being offered a place in school starting from Monday 8th June. There will be a number of changes that your child will need to adjust to when they return and I urge you to talk to them about how the school environment and school routines will be very different.

Whilst steps will be taken to ensure children abide to social distancing rules, I am sure you will appreciate that this is impossible for our younger EYFS children. Therefore, we have taken the following reasonable measures to provide a safer environment. The Early Years children will be a maximum of 15 and will remain in EYFS with the same group of children and adults for the duration of the school day. The children will not be accessing other internal parts of the school. Lunch will be eaten in EYFS. The guidance states that children and adults need to restrict who they come into contact with. They will be cared for by the same adults including covering breaks and lunchtimes, and will not be able to mix with any other groups to avoid cross contamination.

Children of the other three groups will likewise be following the guidelines like EYFS.

- Children will have separate playtimes and lunchtimes in separate areas.
- Children will eat lunch in their classrooms each day.
- Staggered start and finishing times will be implemented and only **one parent** should come to school with their child and abide by the 2m social distance rule. It is vitally important that parents arrive exactly on time and leave immediately at their allocated time. There will be further details on this later this week.
- The Government has published stringent protective safety measures which means that when your child returns to school, it will NOT be to an environment or education as provided prior to lock down. As you can appreciate, this saddens us all but the safety of our whole school community is paramount.

Children in the clinically vulnerable group should seek medical advice regarding if it is appropriate to return to school. Children living in a household with someone who is extremely clinically vulnerable or shielding should not return to school due the risk of infection. **Children will not be penalised for non attendance.** School work will continue to be provided for these children by the class teacher.

Parents must be advised if you have a child that attends school in a priority year group, siblings in other year groups will not be able to attend unless you have already been identified as a key worker or the children are vulnerable.

The school week will be Monday to Friday with Wednesday being a morning only. The school will be closed for all children on Wednesday afternoon so we can have a deep clean across the school. Again, finish times will be staggered for classes following lunch.

There will be no breakfast or after school clubs as this would be in breach of the Government guidelines on children and staff mixing.

In order to reduce possible cross contamination children are not to bring bags or any other equipment except their packed lunch box and personal water bottle to school and should wear fresh own clothes each day. The school will provide personal stationery for all children so they should not bring in any of their own. Children are not required to wear school uniform but may do if this helps with the washing of clothes at home.

Children will be required to sanitise or wash their hands as they enter the school and at regular intervals during the day.

There will be limited toys and resources in the classrooms to avoid cross contamination and regular cleaning will take place.

The Government have instructed staff to wear appropriate PPE if a child is injured and needs attention. You will be contacted if your child needs personal care and asked to come to school for your child to minimise their distress.

If a child becomes ill with symptoms of COVID 19, they will be immediately isolated in school and parents contacted to collect them immediately. The whole household would then be expected to isolate for 14 days and the child must be tested. If tested positive, the whole school group and staff would also have to isolate for 14 days.

Home learning will continue for those children not in school and it will follow what is planned for the children in school. There will be some set time allocated during the week for the teachers to respond to home learning work or your DOJO messages from home. Your child's classteacher will let you know when this will be in due course.

The Free School Meal vouchers will continue for those children entitled that are not in school.

As children become accustomed to the new routines, environments and ways of working and we see the "R" rate decrease, we will look at increasing the year groups that we can accommodate in school.

Once we have finalised the list of the children attending, we will send out a letter with further details including which group your child will be in and your child's start and finishing time each day.

This is an extremely hard letter to write as the staff in school would like nothing better than all our children to return. However, we need to ensure guidelines are followed and the safety of our whole school community is a priority. I know that this is a worrying time for everybody, but it is important that we all support each other in staying safe through this time.

Kind Regards

Mr H. Boyle

Headteacher