St Hilary School

Tuesday 1st September 2020

Dear Parents

Welcome (or should that be welcome back) to the full re-opening of St Hilary School and the 2020-2021 Academic Year. We hope that you have all had a happy, healthy and enjoyable summer and were able to have some quality family time … without the pressures of home-schooling!

We are very pleased to be able to welcome our new Reception children, numerous new recruits across the school and the rest of the school, who have not been in fully since its closure in March. We have greatly missed the children and can’t wait for the classrooms to be filled again with the sound of learning, friendship and laughter.

Attached to this letter is St Hilary’s Back to School Plan, in which we have summarised the most relevant and important details of the schools planning. The school’s important preparatory work and risk assessing enables us to re-open in full accordance with the Government guidance. Additionally, it enables us to feel as confident as possible that we are best placed to protect the health, safety and well-being of all children, staff and members of the school community, while we fully re-open the school to all.

This said it is understandable and to be expected, that children and families will have anxieties and nerves, and possibly be reluctant, about a return to school for a variety of reasons. Our aim is to do everything that we can to help alleviate any such feelings, especially for the children as they return after a long and unpredictable absence, which came with very little warning! Therefore, we ask that if there are any personal factors that you feel are important for us to know when planning for your child’s return to school, please inform your child’s teacher via their school email, or if you would prefer telephone the school office from Thursday 3rd September. This communication will help us to plan appropriate support and advice on a school and individual basis. All responses will be treated with confidentiality and only shared appropriately for planning, including with staff working within class bubbles to enable them to help and support appropriately.

St Hilary School and Leading Edge Academies Partnership have worked hard formulating these return to school plans to allow all children to return safely to school on Monday 7th September. We have kept the plans as simple as possible, while ensuring the health and safety of our pupils, staff and community are best looked after. As you read through the following plans, please do keep in mind that they are all subject to change: our planning is dependent on the developments of COVID-19 and the Government’s reaction to it. If you have any questions regarding the plan feel free to email me on head@st-hilary.cornwall.sch.uk or call the school office from Thursday 3rd September.

I would like to finish with a request for your help. While it is understandable that there are anxieties and nerves about a return to school, it is again compulsory for all children in all year groups. Our children therefore require the best support possible to help make this transition into school as smooth as possible and this starts with how we as parents, carers and teachers show our children we feel about the process. Therefore, if you have questions or anxieties you want to discuss, please email or telephone as I have mentioned above, but when you are talking about starting school with your children, please remember the importance of being as positive as possible about all aspects of their return to school; after all we all know that our children feed off our emotions. With your positivity and support and the usual St Hilary team spirit, I feel confident we will all offer our children the best possible educational and social opportunities the current climate allows!

All the best and I look forward to working with you all this year.

Kindest regards,

Rob Hamshar

**Our back to school plan:**

**Grouping the children:** Our plan will involve splitting the school into zoned Bubbles of pupils and, as far as is practically possible, planning for these Bubbles of children to avoid crossover with each other. Within these Bubbles we will be encouraging the children to physically distance whenever possible. However, the Government recognises that social distancing for primary school aged children is not possible and in their classrooms the children will not be able to maintain this. However, to protect the children to the best of our ability, they will be sat in rows facing the front of the class - avoiding face to face working.

The children will be asked to physically distance from their teachers; however, the teachers will use their professional judgement regarding physically distancing if children require support, are upset, distressed or in need of reassurance. We recognise that it is not always possible to maintain social distancing and we will do our best to meet your child’s emotional needs: we will provide plenty of reassurance, warmth and care for the children.

**Communication:** While parents are able to come onto the school playgrounds for drop off and collection they must respect physical distancing guidance. Unfortunately the school building will not be open for parents, until further notice. But please don’t feel that you cannot communicate with us via the school phone 01736.763324 or via the secretary or teacher emails.

**Attendance:** As of September, the government will no longer be relaxing the rules on attendance. As a result, parents and carers need to contact the school to inform us if their children are absent and as per normal we will be contacting families if their children are not at school.

**Drop off and collection:**

When children return to school, there will be some differences at the start and end of the day. We are staggering the start and finish times for groups in the school, to avoid congestion at the school gates, on the surrounding roads and in the school corridors. Whatever your drop off and collection times, we ask you to strictly adhere to the following:

* Children will be dropped off within the time frames outlined below.
* On arrival, children will go straight to their specified school entrance, rather than waiting/playing on the playground, this is to limit the crossover between different year groups and to stop all children sharing the same entrances.
* At the end of the day children must be collected from their designated playground – please avoid arriving on the playground early and once you have collected your child make a timely exit!
* If you have more than one child at school, you are able to collect them at the same time, **whichever is latest**.
* Please avoid leaning against and unnecessarily touching any of the school property – fences, gates, tables play equipment etc.

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| **Year** | **Drop-off time and location** | **Pick-up time and location** |
| **Reception and Year1** | 8.50 / 9.00 – Lower Playground | 3.00 / 3.10 – Lower Playground |
| **Year 2** | 9.00 / 9.10 – Lower Playground | 3.15 / 3.25 - Lower Playground |
| **Year 3** | 8.50 / 9.00 – Upper Playground | 3.00 / 3.15 – Upper Playground |
| **Year 4** | 8.50 / 9.00 – Upper Playground | 3.00 / 3.15 – Upper Playground |
| **Year 5** | 9.00 / 9.10 – Upper Playground | 3.15 / 3.25 – Upper Playground |
| **Year 6** | 9.00 / 9.10 – Upper Playground | 3.15 / 3.25 – Upper Playground |

**Cleaning:** as per the Government guidance the school has been thoroughly cleaned over the summer holidays and on our return to school in September rigorous cleaning routines will be maintained. In addition to after school cleaning the children’s work spaces will be cleaned at lunchtime to ensure they eat in a clean space and then after they have eaten to ensure the highest hygiene standards for the afternoon.

**Hand washing/sanitizing and respiratory hygiene:** children will be taught the process of handwashing again – the 20 second wash routine is key. At the entrances to the school the children will use adult supervised hand sanitizing stations both on their arrival and as they leave at the end of the day. In addition to these routines, regular handwashing will be maintained. Children will be re-familiarised with ‘Catch-It, Bin-it, Kill-it!’ for coughs and sneezes and each class will have a separate foot peddle bin for disposing of tissues. Children will also be taught to cough into the crook of their arm and to wash their hands after they cough or sneeze.

**Wrap Around Provision - Breakfast club/Funzone:** Our aim is to re-open our wrap around provision from Monday 14th September – week 2. You will be asked to register your child for this provision using the School Gateway app in the first week of term. This will allow us to work out the number of children to plan for and make sure staffing and spacing is managed as safely as possible.

**After School Clubs:** In September, we will not be running after school clubs to minimise the mixing of children in different year groups and to ensure we can staff the wrap around provision adequately. We hope to review this early into the new Academic Year and get back to our normal extra-curricular provision as soon as possible.

**Uniform:** In line with Government guidance, children will need to wear their school uniform in September and there is no requirement to wash it more regularly than you would normally.

**Lunches:** School dinners will be available from September – there may be a slightly simplified menu, but all children requiring a lunch will be catered for. The school lunch time for Year groups will be staggered to avoid crossover between Bubbles and all Year groups will eat in their classrooms apart from Reception and Year 1 who will eat in the hall. For children eating in class, the school dinners will be provided in take-away style boxes. School dinner should be booked and paid for through the ParentPay app. School dinners are £2.40 per day, unless your child is entitled to a free-school meal.

**Equipment:**

- A packed lunch if not having the hot meal option

- A filled, named, water bottle

- An optimistic sunhat and sun-cream!

- Their lovely smiles!

- They WILL NOT NEED to bring any writing or drawing equipment as this will be provided and stored individually.

- We are asking that children do not bring in unnecessary items from home, including toys.

- The children will be completing outdoor PE lessons and will require full PE kit in school (we will review indoor PE provision early in the New Year.)

**Masks:**  Government guidance makes it clear that primary aged children are not expected to wear masks in school, this also applies to the staff. Therefore, we ask that no children wear a mask in school or bring one into school with them. We feel that requiring children to maintain correct hygiene protocols to keep their own masks safe and avoiding masks becoming a health risks to others (lost, lying around, put on desks etc) is too much to expect and manage effectively. If Government guidance on this changes we will inform you of any adjustments to the school’s plan.

**Library:**  the library will be used, but in a more regimented manner. This may mean the children will not be able to change their books as frequently as they had previously.

**Music:** we are keen for music lessons to take place – but these will need to be in smaller class sizes and definitely will not involve sharing instruments. If your child has instrument lessons we will contact you with plans for restarting these in the new academic year.

**Testing for COVID-19:** Currently staff and children are eligible for testing if they show symptoms of COVID 19.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/get-an-antigen-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/>

- If a member of staff tests positive for COVID 19 we will follow Public Health England advice and communicate with parents accordingly.

- Children should not be sent to school if they are unwell. Any child who presents with symptoms will be sent home.

- If you, your child or anyone in your household develops symptoms of COVID 19 you should ALL self-isolate. This is

10 days for the person with symptoms and 14 days for the household members.

There will also be additional controls in place, such as staggered playtimes, all designed with the safety of your children in mind.