



St Mary's
Catholic Primary School and Nursery



Frequently Asked Questions

Nursery, Reception, Year 1 & Year 6

We have confirmed that in line with Cheshire East guidance, our aim is to begin the phased re-opening of our school from 15th June.

The Government presented five tests for easing measures as:

1. Protect the NHS's ability to cope. We must be confident that we are able to provide sufficient critical care and specialist treatment right across the UK.
2. See a sustained and consistent fall in the daily death rates from COVID-19 so we are confident that we have moved beyond the peak.
3. Reliable data from SAGE showing that the rate of infection is decreasing to manageable levels across the board.
4. Be confident that the range of operational challenges, including testing capacity and PPE, are in hand, with supply able to meet future demand.
5. Be confident that any adjustments to the current measures will not risk a second peak of infections that overwhelms the NHS.

Which children will return to school?

The following children will be able to return to school on the following dates:

- Nursery 15th June
- Reception 15th June
- Year 1 22nd June
- Year 6 29th June

Priority Children - vulnerable children and children of critical workers, who have been able to attend since March

All eligible pupils YN YR Y1 Y6 and priority children are required to attend for the **full day**. In order to maximise learning opportunities and in line with government guidance, **a full week's attendance is strongly encouraged.**

I have to go back to work, can I send my child in even if they are not in the selected year groups?

At this stage schools are only open for the selected year groups plus vulnerable children and children of critical workers who have been able to attend throughout the coronavirus outbreak.



If you have been asked to return to work but do not have childcare, please talk to your employer to make necessary adjustments. As some of the restrictions have eased now, you may be able to ask a family member.

I don't feel comfortable about sending my child to school. Do they have to attend?

We are really looking forward to welcoming your child back to school and have taken every precaution to ensure our school environment is as safe as possible. However, we understand that some parents, for a variety of reasons, may wish to keep their child at home and continue for them to learn from home. It is not compulsory for children to attend. The learning materials on our website will continue. Please let us know that you have chosen not to send your child in.

Will I be fined if I keep my children at home?

If you do not send your child in, you will not be fined at this time. We envisage school attendance fines will not be issued until September at the earliest, but this is not confirmed.

Where classrooms in schools are small can groups be smaller than 15?

The maximum group size is 15, but some of our rooms are too small to hold 15 when we space them out. DfE guidance asks that schools calculate how many children can be accommodated in temporary teaching groups and this is dependent upon the size of the classrooms and the layout of the school. Most of our rooms can only accommodate approx. 8 children.

How will St Mary's limit the risk of infection for my child?

We have been carrying out risk assessments ahead of the phased re-opening so that we can put in place a comprehensive programme of measures to limit the risk to our staff and children.

Due to the age of the children who will be returning, social distancing will be a challenge. Therefore the government have suggested;

- smaller class sizes – so we cannot guarantee that your child will be with their friends
- re-arranging the classrooms - ensuring desks are spaced out as far as possible and all unnecessary furniture is removed
- limiting mixing - children will stay in their groups (bubbles) and will be assigned specific staff members – this may not be your child's teacher
- staggered timetables - Limiting the number of children on lunch and breaks at one time and slight changes to pick up and drop off times
- minimising contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend school
- cleaning hands more often than usual - washing hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with running water and soap and dry them thoroughly or use alcohol hand rub or sanitiser ensuring that all parts of the hands are covered



- ensuring good respiratory hygiene - promote the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach
- cleaning frequently touched surfaces often using standard products, such as disinfectant

Please continue to read the '***What are the practical things I need to know about returning to school?***' question further down!

Is marking out the floors to ensure that children are never less than 2m apart something that all schools are doing?

This is definitely one of the measures that we have considered. It is not mandatory. Floor marking is one of the measures included in the risk assessment. For example, in areas where queues may develop, our floor markings can indicate safe distance rules. Floor marking may also be used along some of our shared corridors to keep pupils apart on one side.

Will the school day start and end at the same time?

There are some slight changes to the timings of the school day to ensure we can safely manage drop off and collection of children. These arrangements are outlined below and will be included in the information shared with each year group.

Year Group	Drop Off between	Location	Collection between	Location
Nursery	8.30 – 9.00	Nursery Garden	2.30- 3.00	Nursery Door
Reception	8.45 – 9.15	Class Door	2.45- 3.15	Class Door
Year 1	9.00 – 9.30	Enter by gate by 9/10 building. KS1 Playground	2.30 – 3.00	KS1 Playground doors
Year 6	8.45 – 9.15	Enter by MUGA gate UKS2 Playground	2.45 – 3.15	UKS2 Playground

Please arrive on time. If you are late, it is likely the gates will be locked and you will need to call the school number to gain access.

How will I drop off and collect my child?

Only one parent can accompany your child on and off the site. Please do not arrive any earlier than is necessary to avoid groups gathering on site and you must leave immediately. You must not use the staff car park unless you hold a valid disabled parking permit. Please follow all site signage. Please follow your designated route. There is a helpful video and map on our website which will show you what to expect and the routes to take. A copy of the routes around school can be found at the end of this document.

What if one of my children is in one of the returning years but another is not?

Only children in these year groups can return to school from 15th June. This does not include siblings in different year groups unless those siblings are in a priority group, for example, vulnerable children and children of critical workers.



If you need to bring a sibling on site to drop off and collect another child, please adhere to the protocols in place on site by following the signage and keeping physically distant from others.

Should my child wear a face covering, mask or other PPE?

Government guidance states, "Wearing a face covering or face mask in schools or other education settings is not recommended"

Staff will only wear PPE when;

- a child whose care routinely already involves the use of PPE due to their intimate care needs.
- a child becomes unwell with symptoms of coronavirus while in their setting and needs direct personal care until they can return home. A face mask should be worn by the supervising adult if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained. If contact with the child or young person is necessary, then gloves, an apron and a face mask should be worn by the supervising adult. If a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes, for example from coughing, spitting, or vomiting, then eye protection should also be worn.



Will there be COVID-19 testing and contact tracing in education and childcare settings?

Testing is already available for all school staff and their household members.

When the wider cohort of children are invited to return to their education settings, all those children eligible to attend, and members of their households, will have access to testing if they display symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19).

To access testing parents should use the 111 online coronavirus service if their child is 5 or over. They should call 111 if the child is under 5.

This will enable your child to get back into childcare or education, and parents or carers to get back to work, if the test proves to be negative.

In the event of a child or member of staff testing positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), the relevant group of people within the school with whom the child has mixed closely (their bubble), should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days. As part of the national test and trace programme, if other cases are detected within the cohort or in the wider setting, Public Health England's local Health Protection teams will conduct a rapid investigation and will advise our school and other settings on the most appropriate action to take.

Usually someone else collects my child from school as I have to go into work, can someone from another household collect my child?

Government guidance would only allow someone to pick up a child from another household if a 2m distance is kept between them. This would be very difficult with young children and



therefore we would advise only members from your household should collect your child at this time.

Is SMART Club open?



At this stage we are able to operate SMART Club for pupils in the year groups who have returned to school. We will inform you if we are unable to continue this provision.

Childcare will continue for children of critical workers not in the identified year groups who have no alternative options available beyond the core day – the last resort option remains in place, as we will not have the capacity to open various year groups as well as cover the childcare needs of key workers

Will my child get a hot meal or a packed lunch?



To help with staggered lunch times, we be operating a provision of a packed lunch for everyone. A packed lunch will reduce the contact required for serving food and movement around the school. Our Halls are currently being used to store all the furniture we have had to remove from classroom bases. We will keep you informed of any changes to lunch time arrangements, although this is unlikely for the foreseeable future.

What should I do if I think I might be eligible for Free School Meals?



If you think your child may be eligible for **free school meals**, please telephone **0300 123 5012**. A decision will be given over the phone. Free school meals are not back dated, and so any meals taken before children are officially added to the register will have to be paid for. An application must be made for each individual child even if you already have an older child in receipt of Free School Meals

If I don't send my child in, will I still get my FSM voucher?

The provision of food vouchers for those eligible under the benefits criteria will also continue to be available where needed for those not attending school. If your child comes into school, the vouchers will cease as we will provide them with lunch. We will let you know if government guidance is updated.

Will my child be taught by their usual teacher?

We cannot guarantee this as each class needs to be split into their 'bubbles'. The aim is to have at least one adult who will be familiar to the children in each class bubble. This may be a teacher or a teaching assistant.

What are the practical things I need to know about returning to school?

- Best possible hygiene practices will be in place for everyone in school – Staff and pupils
- Pupils and staff will be washing their hands on entering the building, before and after eating and at given points throughout the day



- Staff will be washing their hands after handling pupil books/ resources
- Good levels of personal hygiene will need to be observed by all pupils i.e. toilets, flushing, handwashing, cleanliness
- Cleaning regimes and patterns will change including frequently touched surfaces, equipment, door handles, toilets
- Soap and water will be available
- Pupils will be expected to observe 'catch it, bin it, kill it' routines with tissues, which will be available in all areas
- Pupils will be encouraged to help staff in the end of day clean-down of surfaces i.e their own chair and desk and any equipment they have been using
- Pupils must avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth as these are the mucus areas where the virus attaches
- Home Learning materials will continue to be available for year groups not currently involved in the phased re-opening plans
- Every item of your child's clothing must be washed daily to limit the virus being transferred from school to home and from home to school. To support parents in this, we will not be expecting pupils to wear their uniforms.
- Staff too will be wearing more relaxed/ informal clothing
- Staff will be observing 'social distancing' including lunch and break times
- To minimise contact between pupils, pupils will remain together in designated 'bubbles' – small consistent groups
- The reduction in class size i.e. 'bubbles' may mean your child will not be with their previous teacher
- Playtimes and lunchtimes will be taken in the designated limited bubble group – there will be no contact or coming together with any other pupils and breaks and lunch times maybe at different times for us to be able to achieve this
- Bubbles will have designated play zones which they will have to stay in
- If your child displays any of the known COVID 19 symptoms they must not attend school and you must inform us of the outcome of any positive test to enable us to instruct the remaining members of the bubble to isolate for 14 days.
- Pupils will be taken outside as often as possible on a rota/ timetabled basis
- All lunches will be packed lunches which will be eaten in their bubble group. If your child is bringing their own packed lunch from home, please ensure all cartons and utensils are disposable, and it comes to school in a bag not a lunch box and your child is able to open and access all the wrapping and seals
- Pupils will need 2 additional snacks – again that they can open and are in disposable wrapping
- Pupils will need to bring their own individual water bottle – rinsed and re-filled daily
- If in receipt of Free School Meals vouchers will cease if your child is attending school as a packed lunch will be provided



- There will be a one-way system in operation around the school if anyone from the 'bubble' group needs to move from their base
- Movement around the school will be limited and one-way, and pupils will be asked to follow markings on the floor to stay away from each other in the style familiar now in supermarkets and shops
- Pupils will not be lining up; they will be using floor markings to keep safe distances from each other and will need to move slowly between the 2m spaces
- Soft furnishings and soft toys will have to be removed from the working environment
- We will be unable to;
 - *sing*
 - *have assembly*
 - *access the trim trail*
 - *share resources*
 - *gather other than with the children in the designated 'bubble'*
 - *have any events, trips or visitors*
- PE will be limited. Equipment will be washed and assigned to bubble. All PE activities will be undertaken at a safe distance from others
- Times of arrival and departure to school are to avoid any contact with other pupils – specific details have been shared
- There will be designated entry and exit points – please follow the signage
- One parent only to bring and collect as outlined above – please follow the signage
- 'Drop and go' system in operation – parents will not be permitted to stay or gather on site
- All conversations with staff will need to be pre-arranged/ pre-booked and need to be by phone or email. We must limit face to face interaction wherever possible
- High standards in hand hygiene for everyone will be a key factor in keeping everyone safe
- Pupils will have their own individual resources. Pencil cases will have to be left in school
- Pupils must not bring a school bag
- Pupils do not need to bring their reading folder
- Pupils will be sitting apart, spaced out on singular tables in rows with space in between where possible (exam style)
- Access to equipment will be limited i.e. no computing suite
- Resources that are not easily washable or wipe able will be limited or removed
- All pupils will be expected to fully comply with all our guidelines and expectations. If they are unable to do so and therefore risk the health, safety and well-being of others, parents will be contacted and asked to collect them. If pupils cannot abide by the rules, nobody is safe and risk rises



- SMART Club will be in operation for pupils in the year groups who have returned to school
- Childcare will continue for children of critical workers not in the identified year groups who have no alternative options available – the last resort option remains, as we will not have the capacity to open various year groups as well as cover the childcare needs of key workers

Will St Mary's be open for the Summer holiday?



The Government has not yet issued any guidance about opening in the summer, so we are currently planning to be closed for the summer break. However, SMART Club will be operating a childcare service. For summer bookings, please contact a member of the SMART Club team on 07983304425.

Where can I find advice on supporting my children at home?

Please find the latest government advice for parents/carers at Help primary school children continue their education during coronavirus (COVID-19)

How much am I expected to educate my child at home?

Several parents have asked for advice on how to manage home learning.

We have continued to provide educational activities that your child/children might do since March 22nd on our website and on the Class Do-Jo system. However, it is also important that you and your family balance home learning with other activities that will keep your children happy and occupied in a healthy and balanced way. You are the best judge of what they need whilst they are in your care at home. It is important to provide enjoyable and relaxing things to do – reading and researching, creative activities, physical exercise, simply chatting and watching TV. It is helpful to create a routine for children so that their minds are kept active with interesting tasks and challenges, however, you do not need to try to replicate a school timetable if you feel you can't. Focus on what you can do. As the restrictions are eased, going outdoors and meeting up with family is now possible.

If you feel that your child is under pressure to complete a lot of online learning tasks, please contact your child's class teacher through the Class Do-Jo system for advice on how to manage this. It is not clear how long requirements and restrictions will be in place, and so we continue to do all we can to help keep your child actively engaged during this time, in readiness for their return to school. We want to ensure that we are supporting you as a family and offering your child/ren every opportunity to stay connected to their learning, whatever age they are.

Are there any additional on-line resources for adults and children with additional needs and learning difficulties?

Photosymbols have launched new easy read website on Coronavirus for people with learning disabilities.

<https://www.keepsafe.org.uk>



[New guidance for parent carers around support available to help care for children with additional needs during the Covid-19 crisis \(PDF, 3.2 MB\)](#)

Where can I find Education Resources On-line?

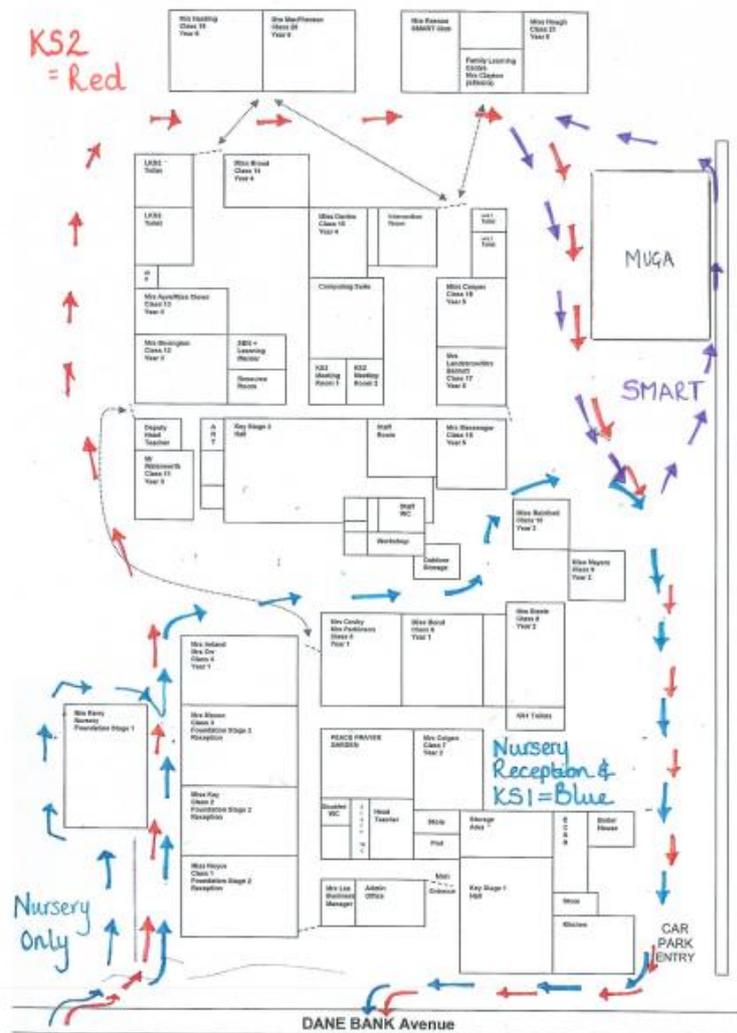
In addition to online resources we already have in place, the DfE have now brought together an initial list of online educational resources to help children to learn at home; all currently being offered for free.

It is not intended that these individual resources replace our planned curriculum, but they will help you as parents continue to support your child's education. Resources are available online: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-online-education-resources>.

How can I look after my child's mental health and well-being?

The government has just issued new guidance for parents and carers on looking after the mental health and well-being of children and young people, during the COVID-19 outbreak. This advice can be found at COVID-19: guidance on supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing.

What is the planned route around school?



Bicycles please come in through the car park gate, out through the main gate and back in through the end gate.