

Dear Parents/Carers

Arrangements for the Start of the New School Year: Nursery

Our updated School Restart Plan provides information about our arrangements for reopening the school to pupils in September 2021. It is important to note however, that the Public Health advice at the time of reopening will prevail over any of the planning assumptions we have made in our Restart Plan. The Covid-19 virus continues to have implications for society and we may need to adjust our plans to address any issues that may arise as the children return to school.

This plan sets out some general points about the arrangements for the children's return to school. There is also some information which relates specifically to the return of children in Nursery and this is included under the heading 'Arrangements for Nursery Pupils'.

Supporting Children to Return to School

We want to ensure that the children are excited and relaxed about coming back to school. It is important we work together to alleviate any such issues. Please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Rogan or Mrs Downard (Vice-Principal) or Mrs Murray (SENCO) to discuss any specific concerns you may have about your child's return to school. Some of the mitigations and new routines which were introduced last year will remain in place initially and we will ensure that the children are reminded of these on their return.

Hand Hygiene

Children should continue to be reminded of the significance of hand hygiene in preventing the spread of the Covid-19 virus. To prepare children for restarting school, you should ensure that they know how to wash their hands properly for at least twenty seconds with soap and water. This will be particularly important for younger children. The children will continue with the regular hand washing routine which was implemented last year.

Due to allergies and possible skin reactions, staff will not administer hand sanitisers to pupils. However, if parents of older pupils feel that their child should use hand sanitiser, then children can bring some to school for their own individual use. This should be labelled with their name and should not be shared with other pupils.

'Catch It, Bin It, Kill It'

We would encourage you to remind your children of the importance of good respiratory hygiene and encourage them to follow the 'Catch it, Bin it, Kill it' approach. Children should be discouraged from touching their eyes, face, nose and mouth. Please show them how to cough or sneeze into their elbow if they do not have a tissue. When using a tissue, they should be shown how to cough or

sneeze into it and then dispose of it safely into the nearest bin. Your help in building a level of routine in relation to respiratory hygiene would be much appreciated.

Social Distancing for Pupils

It is acknowledged that young children cannot reasonably be expected to remain apart from each other throughout the day and that children flourish mentally, physically and emotionally through interactive play.

Although the use of formal bubbles is no longer required, the school will continue to adopt a cautious and measured approach and the Nursery pupils will continue to have very limited contact with any other pupils or adults outside of their own protective bubble.

Social Distancing for Parents

It is important that parents/carers continue to maintain appropriate social distancing when children are entering/exiting the school grounds. We have not staggered the start/finish times for each Year Group in order to minimise disruption for families who have children in different Year Groups. However, your ongoing co-operation in reducing congestion and interactions around the entry/exit points would be greatly appreciated.

We must all accept our collective responsibility to prevent virus spread. Whilst we understand the importance of connecting socially with other members of the school community, we strongly advise parents/carers not to congregate around the site. It is important to remember that the identification of positive cases in our school community can result in disruption for the affected class(es). It is essential that each of us does everything we can to prevent this.

In order to keep the number of adults coming on to the school site to a minimum, it is recommended that only one parent/carer should escort the children from their household to school. Where children are capable of making their own way independently to and from their classroom/supervised muster point, they should be encouraged to do so and parents should only escort them as far as the school gates.

We appreciate that on the first day of school for Nursery and Primary One pupils more than one adult may wish to accompany the child. However, after your child's first day at school, we would ask Nursery and Primary One parents to adhere to the recommendation for only one adult to accompany children to and from school.

Traffic Management

The school has a Traffic Management Plan the aim of which is to keep the site a safe place for all users. Parents/carers are asked to note that, in the current circumstances, there may be an increase in the number of pupils walking/cycling to and from school. Therefore, you should exercise extreme care and attention when driving into and exiting from the Parish Hall and Church car parks. Signs notifying users of 5mph speed limits are clearly displayed. All drivers are asked to adhere to that limit and to show courtesy and consideration to other car park users. Parking indiscriminately, such as mounting pavements, double parking, stopping on yellow lines, obstructing access points and parking near junctions causes danger to pupils and other road users.

Please note, spaces in the Parish Hall car park may fill up quickly at drop off/pick up times so we would encourage as many parents/carers as possible to use the Church car park. This will also help with social distancing.

Wearing of PPE

School staff may, on occasions, wear items of PPE which might include wearing visors and/or gloves and/or an apron and/or a mask if they are giving first aid to a child, assisting a child with toileting or if the staff member's own personal circumstances requires additional protective measures to be taken in certain situations.

Children Showing Symptoms of COVID-19

The most recent PHA advice states that children under the age of five are encouraged, but not required, to take a PCR test. They do not need to isolate unless they develop symptoms or have a positive PCR test.

If your child has any symptoms of Covid-19, they should stay at home for the recommended isolation period. He/she may return to school upon receipt of a negative PCR test result.

If a pupil displays symptoms of Covid-19 whilst at school, he/she and any siblings within the school setting must be sent home and advised to follow the PHA guidance for households with a possible Covid-19 infection.

Children between the ages of 5-17 who are not fully vaccinated and are identified as a close contact should self-isolate and book a PCR test as soon as possible. Therefore, any siblings of a Nursery child who is a confirmed positive case should arrange a PCR test. If the result is negative, they can end their self-isolation and return to school. PHA advice is that they should arrange to take another PCR test after eight days.

Parents, pupils and staff share a duty of care to one another and so in that respect, it will be important for all of us to comply with the PHA processes for self-isolation and testing.

In order to ensure we have accurate records of everyone who has been in contact with anyone who tests positive, it will be necessary for us to record the name and contact details of everyone who enters the school buildings even if it is only for a short time. This will include any parent visiting the school for an appointment with a member of staff.

Payments and Cash Handling

The Education Authority is continuing to work towards the implementation of cashless payment procedures for school meals and other school activities but unfortunately, this option is not yet available in St Joseph's. Therefore, we would ask that payments to the Education Authority or the school should, where possible, be made by cheque. If you are sending cash to school, we would ask you to place it in an envelope or wrapping which is labelled clearly showing what the payment is for. Please try to ensure that the correct amount of money is provided in order to reduce the requirement to give change. This will improve efficiency and may also help to reduce potential spread of infection.

Arrangements for Nursery Pupils

Start Date: Individual Induction meetings have been scheduled for each child in the weeks beginning 23/08/21 and 30/08/21. Parents will be provided with an attendance schedule for their child at these meetings.

Morning/Afternoon Drop off: 8:50am and 12:20pm:

- Parents will escort their children to Nursery via the main access pathway which runs along the perimeter of the Nursery site.
- Parents/carers should enter through the wooden gate which leads into the play area. Nursery staff will supervise access and egress at this point.
- Entry to the Nursery building will be via the playroom fire doors.
- Parents/carers are asked to drop off and to leave the site as quickly as possible. Staff will have procedures in place to support children who are finding it difficult to settle
- Parents/carers should exit through the wooden entrance/exit gate
- Parents/carers should leave the Nursery site via the steps. This is to implement a 'one way' flow as far as possible. We understand that this may not be practical if accompanied by very young children who require the use of a pushchair. In such cases, parents/carers may retrace their entry route back up the main Nursery pathway. We would ask that you show due care and attention to each other by respecting the social distancing requirements and, where possible, by giving way to oncoming adults/children.

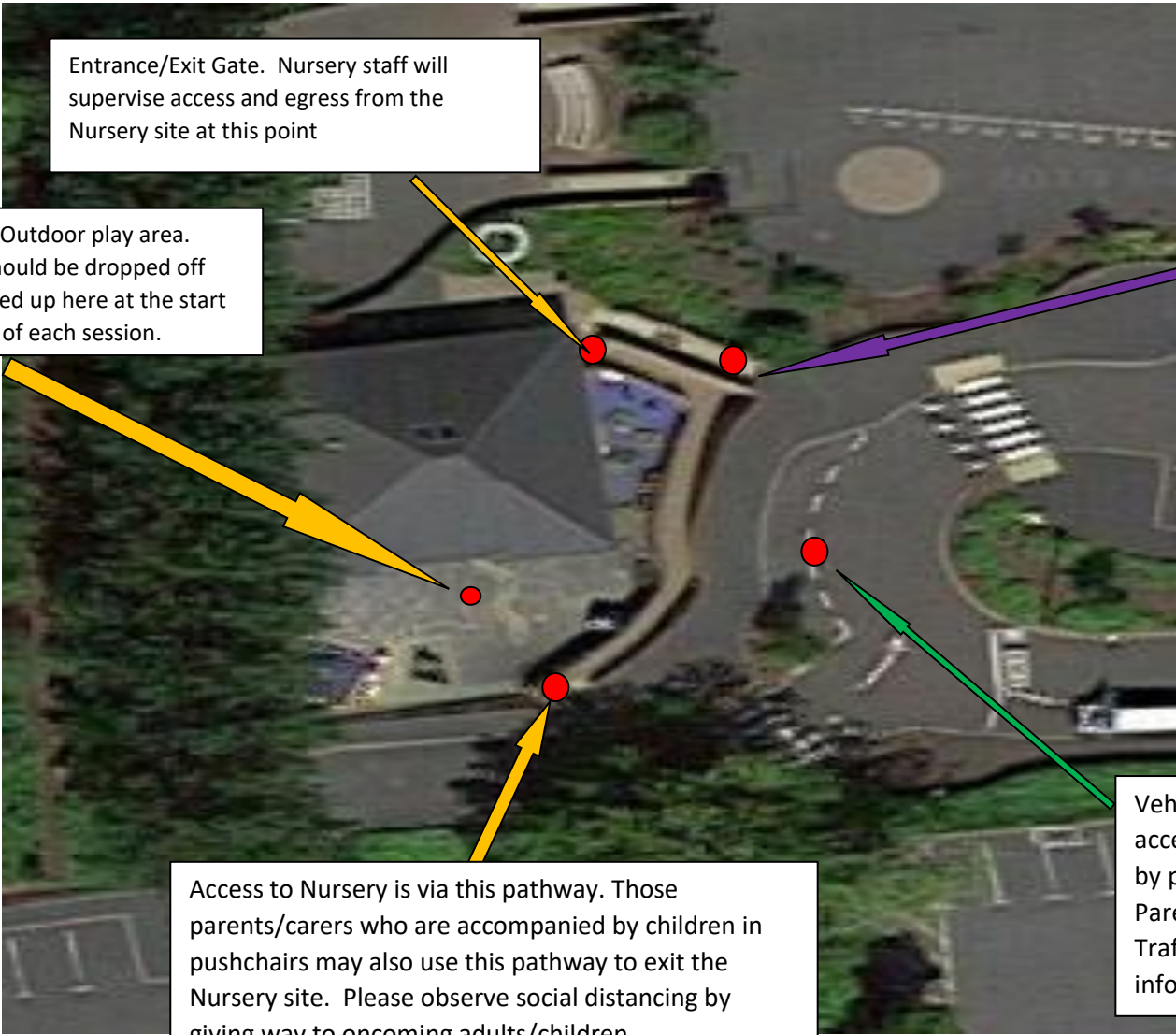
Morning/Afternoon Pick Up: 11:20am and 2:50pm

- Parents/carers will enter the Nursery via the main access pathway which runs along the perimeter of the Nursery site
- Parents/carers should then enter through the wooden gate which leads into the play area. Nursery staff will supervise access/egress at this point
- Parents/carers will be able to observe appropriate levels of social distancing by spacing themselves out around the perimeter of the play area
- Children will be released from a central point and will exit through the wooden gate
- Parents/carers should leave the Nursery site using the steps in order to implement a 'one way' flow as far as possible. We understand that this may not be practical if accompanied by very young children who require the use of a pushchair. In such cases, parents/carers may retrace their entry route back up the main Nursery pathway. We would ask that you show due care and attention to each other by respecting the social distancing requirements and, where possible, by giving way to oncoming adults/children

This plan and the precautions set out in it have been put in place to help stop the spread of the Covid-19 virus and to ensure that we all take responsibility for this. These arrangements will be kept under review and any changes will be communicated to you as appropriate.

Yours sincerely

Dominic Donnelly



Entrance/Exit Gate. Nursery staff will supervise access and egress from the Nursery site at this point

Nursery Outdoor play area. Pupils should be dropped off and picked up here at the start and end of each session.

Steps for exiting the Nursery site. Where possible, parents are asked to exit the Nursery site via the steps. This is to facilitate a 'one way' flow to and from the Nursery site as far as possible.

Access to Nursery is via this pathway. Those parents/carers who are accompanied by children in pushchairs may also use this pathway to exit the Nursery site. Please observe social distancing by giving way to oncoming adults/children.

Vehicle parking zone for Nursery. Vehicular access to the site is strictly limited and is only by prior agreement with the Principal. Parents/carers should consult the school's Traffic Management Plan for further information.

Pedestrian Entrance

