

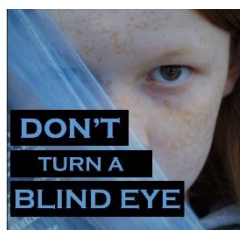


15th July 2020

Dear families,

END OF ACADEMIC YEAR 2019-2020

Inspire a generation...



This school year has challenged us all. It began with excitement and ambition to build upon success and achieve much, the plans for which were forcibly adapted as we approached the mid-point of the year and it was becoming clear that pandemic would lead to school closure.

Limited guidance from central government placed a huge responsibility on schools to translate home learning plans whilst education was suspended for all year groups, and then gradually phased back with fewer year groups and pupils. Key 'critical' worker care activity and the planning for the safety of all, with associated risk assessment approval led us into a journey not travelled before.

During pandemic the priority must be safety, and we thank all who have been part of the journey since March, especially those who have interpreted our plans in the home and sent us some lovely images and samples of the huge amount of creative learning produced; and sent us positive feedback. It has been impossible to please everyone, but we hope we have ensured that our home learning offer was accessible to all families. Our teachers and wider team have been united in their work to ensure continuous learning, through calls home and much work on our 'recovery' curriculum offer for 2020-21; as well as facilitating key 'critical' worker care and return to 'bubbles' throughout the whole period of lockdown, including over planned breaks and bank holidays. The 'return' at phase 1 has been successful, with pupils enjoying the learning experiences offered and showing resilience and mutual respect by ensuring our new ways of working are followed. Any apprehension or anxiety appears to be long gone. This has helped us to develop our approach to provision in September. Our PGCE group did not finish their training in March 2020 either. Unlike many initial teacher training programmes, their provision exceeded all others as Mrs Furey led them in a series of online tutorials, experiences and virtual lessons delivered to our pupils up to Y5, with Y6 meeting an explorer, working on a photography project, their images to go on a long journey with Richard Garriott on the Challenger Deep expedition to the western Pacific Ocean, where he'll ride in a submarine made of titanium to the bottom of the Mariana Trench, the deepest known point on Earth. Our PGCE beginning teachers are ready to embark upon a teaching career rooted in service. Thanks also to our Westhoughton Cluster schools, whose Headteachers have collaborated to ensure a uniform approach across the town.

Our Y6 pupils have had a different ending to their primary journey, one with no SATs and very different transition arrangements. Their virtual leaving assembly video will be published later this week on our social media and a virtual gathering is planned for this week. Thank you to those secondary schools we have engaged with this year who have ensured discussion with our Y6 teachers and virtual induction for our pupils. We wish our Y6 pupils and their families well as they continue their learning journey. Our new intake of Reception families have also had virtual transition, supported by a series of videos from our Reception team.

It does not seem a year since Mr Johnson began his full-time secondment to the St Teresa of Calcutta Catholic Academy Trust and the Diocese of Salford Department for Education. It has been a year of growth, where the Trust has moved from having two academies to working with six schools across primary and secondary sectors. It was our plan for Sacred Heart to join this Trust, but we have 'paused' this for now. Mr Johnson will continue his work with the Diocese and as interim CSEL (CEO) next year, but will be returning refreshed to Sacred Heart as Executive Headteacher for the equivalent of two days / week. Thank you to Mrs Callow who has been in the role of Head of School this year. Miss Middleton has been appointed as our Interim Deputy Headteacher as Mrs Callow prepares to begin her secondment to St Gregory's RC Primary Voluntary Academy. Mr Gallagher will continue to work with us as Associate Headteacher.

Education is constantly evolving – and expectations are very different now to at the start of this school year. In September, all children will return to school as we begin our 'phase 2 reopening' and 'recovery curriculum', one which aims to bring our children back to school and encourage catch up through effective engagement and learning. Relationships & Health Education (RHE) will

form a developing aspect of our offer as we use the 'Life to the Full' approach. The recovery curriculum will also ensure that if a local lockdown occurs, our pupils will be enabled to continue with learning in new ways using Google classrooms and Oak Academy. The Government has provided all schools with funded training to implement this Google (*or Microsoft*) solution. Our initial set up meeting took place earlier this week.

As you will all know, earlier in July the Government issued initial guidance on September re-opening. The current advice is for pupils to sit in rows facing the front of class, for uniform to be worn, and bubbles to be expanded as all children return. We will initially be working with year group bubbles of 60 pupils, before considering moving to larger phase bubbles of 120 pupils. This means that children can share the use of equipment across their year group and that 'catch-up' sessions can be delivered to groups from different classes within the same year. Children from that bubble will also be able to play together at break times. We plan to continue with lunch being delivered to each class base across more than one sitting to stagger the playground use; and areas such as the media suite will be sanitised between use.

Part of this return guidance also encourages phased drop off and pick up, limiting social contact. This means that whilst the time spent in school remains the same, the actual start and end times will differ by year group. We do plan to continue with similar systems to now, with children handed over to staff at the gate (with some adjustment for those starting school in Reception) and one-way systems at pick up time. This means that our park & walk facility is unable to reopen as all outdoor spaces are used in the safe handover arrangements.

Our initial plan includes the following drop off times:

Reception: From 8:30am (via orchard gate, Central Drive) | Year 1: 8:30am (via driveway gate, Central Drive) | Year 2: 8:50am (via driveway gate, Central Drive) | Year 3: 8:30am (via workshop gate, Cherwell Road) | Year 4: 8:30am (via Park & Walk gate, Cherwell Road) | Year 5: 8:50am (via workshop gate, Cherwell Road) | Year 6: 8:50am (via Park & Walk gate, Cherwell Road)

Older siblings may be dropped off from the gate of the younger child, at the same time as the younger child. (All class teachers will be in their class base, as usual, by 8:30am.)

Pick up times for Reception, Y1, Y3 & Y4 are planned to be 3:20pm; and for Y2, Y5 & Y6, 3:40pm. The procedures for this will be shared before we return in September, but will be similar to the current pick up for each bubble with four locations to collect pupils and a one way system. This will cause some disruption where siblings are collected 20mins apart, so we are working out the best way to minimise this without disturbing the final 20mins of learning.

Our before and after school clubs will also resume in September as the government guidance allows, meaning school will be open from 7:30am to 5:30pm. This should support parents in getting back into a normal routine. As soon as the guidance allows, and it is safe to do so, our school day will return to the normal times, 8:55am-3:35pm (with doors opening ten minutes early at 8:45am to enable less congestion at drop-off).

We will issue more detailed procedural information as we prepare to return in September, giving us time to have the plan approved by Governors and the associated risk assessments approved by the LA. In September, we have some new appointments – people who will bring their gift to flourish in our school as teachers, Miss Brown (5B) & Mr Robinson (4R) join us. Both have trained with us this year, so are already established as part of the team. This enables Mr Goulding to provide teaching cover across the school; and Mr Stubbs to deliver a programme of catch-up throughout school. Miss Taylor-Wilson, who joined us on 1st May is our new Early Years Foundation Stage lead; and Miss Butler takes up shared role of School Business Manager as Mrs Owen moves to part-time working.

Please keep in your prayers, for a full recovery, our Chair of Governors, Mrs Morris, who has been unwell; and Mrs Gregory and her family as they grieve the sudden and tragic loss of Jack.

As we prepare for the break, we send our best wishes to our Y6 pupils, and any other pupils who are moving to new schools. Please continue to '*expect the unexpected*' and offer Sacred Heart your demonstrative support as we begin a new school year in September, with the promise of exciting new opportunity and challenge.

We pray, stay with us Lord, on our journey.

With best wishes for the summer.

M Johnson

Mr M Johnson

Executive Headteacher

Catholic Senior Executive Leader

C Callow

Mrs C Callow

Head of School

B Furey

Mrs B Furey

Strategic Director

Heart TSA

K A Morris

Mrs KA Morris

Chair of Governors