



In opening our school to more children, St Joseph's has conducted a thorough COVID-19 risk assessment in line with government guidance and has implemented safeguards and procedures so that we achieve an environment that is as safe as we possibly can, whilst understanding that we will not be able to eliminate all risks. St Joseph's has been open during the national lock down period and have well established procedures for managing the learning of children in an environment that is as safe as we can possibly maintain. Now that the Government has announced that all children will return to school in September we are reviewing our risk assessment to ensure they reflect the new guidance.

These FAQs aim to show you how we have responded to government guidance and how we aim to maintain our environment in accordance with that guidance, which we will keep under review as and when new guidance is published. It is important to emphasise that no environment is completely risk free. We are aware of the risks and this document shows you how we aim to control them as best we can.

## **1. Do I have to send my child to school?**

Government guidance states that 'Returning to school is vital for children's education and for their wellbeing' and that the 'risk to children themselves of becoming severely ill from coronavirus (COVID-19) is very low'.

If your child has an Education Health and Care Plan, your child has a named social worker, or you are a key worker, your child has been entitled to a place in school since the start of the lockdown period on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, when schools were open to this small group of children in order to reduce the risk of transmission of coronavirus and to protect the NHS. Since June 1<sup>st</sup> as the situation had improved, schools have been open to some year groups educated in 'bubbles'. Since June 15<sup>th</sup>, schools have had the flexibility to bring other pupils back where we have had the space to do so.

Due to a decrease in the transmission of the virus, and the fact that the NHS Test and Trace system is up and running, the Government expects all children in all year groups to return to school at the start of the autumn term, full-time. The Government has stated also stated that from the beginning of the autumn term school attendance will be mandatory again and the usual rules will apply, these are:

- parents' duty to secure that their child attends regularly at school where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age;
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' codes of conduct

Where pupils who are still be unable to attend school in line with public health/clinical advice, absence will not be penalised.

**Children who are symptomatic or live with a family member who is symptomatic will be expected to follow the self-isolation guidance and not be in school. This is exactly the same for adults in school.**

**From 1<sup>st</sup> August the shielding advice for adults and children will pause, provided there continues to be a reduction in rates of transmission of the virus. Some pupils who are no-longer required to shield from 1<sup>st</sup> August but who remain under the care of a specialist health professional should discuss their care with their health professional before returning to school in September.** If they cannot attend due to clinical or public health advice they will be offered access to remote education.

You can read the guidance 'What parents and carers need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges until August 2020' [here](#).

You can read the 'Guidance for full opening: schools' [here](#).

You can read the staying at home guidance for households with possible coronavirus [here](#).

You can read the Guidance on shielding and protecting people who are extremely clinically vulnerable [here](#).

You can read the full guidance 'Actions for Schools during the coronavirus outbreak' [here](#).

## **2. How will you keep my child safe?**

We have introduced the following measures in line with government guidance for safe working in education, including:

- changing classroom layouts so that desks and chairs are all forward facing
- creating year group 'bubbles' groups with a maximum of 15 children, one teacher, and if required, one teaching assistant, who will remain with that group for a minimum of a week. This will ensure interactions are kept within the group
- staggering break and lunchtimes so that year groups of children don't mix with each other and interaction is kept to a minimum
- keeping each year group 'bubble' group away from others to limit the mixing of groups

For the return of all children in the autumn term, we will be working to the requirements set out in the latest government 'Guidance for full opening', which builds on the control and protective measures that have already been established in our schools:

- requirement that people who are ill stay at home
- robust hand & respiratory hygiene – 'catch it, bin it, kill it'
- enhanced cleaning arrangements
- active engagement with NHS Test and Trace
- reducing contacts and maximising distance between those in school wherever possible

Reducing contacts may include, as far as is practicable, grouping children together, avoiding contact between groups, staff maintaining distance from pupils and other staff.

We will continue to work together with your children to maintain good hygiene practices, with children washing their hands throughout the day for at least 20 seconds with soap, when they arrive in school, when they return from breaks, when they return to the classroom and before and after eating. Catching coughs and sneezes with tissues and encouraging children to avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth will be promoted.

Resources will not be shared between children until they have been cleaned, and frequently touched objects will be wiped regularly by staff. In the early years, resources will not be shared between groups of children.

The Government has recognised that 'unlike older children and adults, early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff'. Furthermore, there are some children for whom, in order to keep them safe, it will not always be possible to maintain the recommended distance of 2 metres. We have therefore worked through the Government's 'hierarchy of measures', as set out in the [guidance Implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings](#):

- avoiding contact with anyone with symptoms
- frequent hand cleaning and good hygiene practices
- regular cleaning of settings
- minimising contact and mixing

We will continue to welcome fewer visitors in school than usual, who will mainly be providing ongoing maintenance services, safeguarding/ therapeutic support. Governors will now attend school as required. Any external people entering school will be providing essential services. They will be expected to follow our COVID -19 visitor protocols and will only work in areas of the school where children and staff are not present. We have strict protocols in place in order to receive deliveries.

You can read the full guidance 'Implementing Protective Measures in Primary Schools' [here](#).

### **3. Do I have to send my child to school if I share a household with people who are shielding?**

Up until the end of the summer term you do not have to send your child to school if a member of your household is shielding due to being in one or more of the clinically extremely vulnerable categories that the Government has outlined. We recommend that you follow the Government guidance if you share a household with a person in this category. Your child will be able to access online learning whilst they remain at home, which is the same offer that children attending school will receive.

From 1<sup>st</sup> August the shielding advice for adults and children will pause, provided there continues to be a reduction in rates of transmission of the virus. Some pupils who are no longer required to shield from 1<sup>st</sup> August but who remain under the care of a specialist health professional should discuss their care with their health professional before

returning to school in September. If they cannot attend due to clinical or public health advice they will be offered access to remote education.

Government guidance states that 'individuals who were considered to be clinically extremely vulnerable and received a letter advising them to shield are now advised that they can return to work from 1 August as long as they maintain social distancing.' The guidance also states that 'People who live with those who are clinically extremely vulnerable or clinically vulnerable can attend the workplace'.

You can read the guidance on shielding [here](#).

You can read the guidance for schools during the coronavirus outbreak [here](#).

#### **4. Will regular hand washing be monitored by staff?**

Handwashing is built into the normal school routine. Staff will monitor the pupils that they are working with and ensure that they are washing their hands with soap for at least 20 seconds when they arrive in school, at regular periods during the day especially after breaks, when moving from one location to another, that they are catching coughs and sneezes with tissues and then washing hands, and that they are washing their hands before and after eating. Staff will also encourage children to avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth. There will be posters reminding children of how to wash their hands in the toilets and staff will supervise handwashing after children visit the toilets. Younger children and those with complex needs will be supervised closely.

#### **5. Will the school have enough supplies of hand sanitiser etc?**

The school will ensure that it monitors its supplies of hand sanitiser, soap and other essential products that are needed to maintain good hygiene. The Department for Education are aware that some items will be in high demand and have a contact email for schools should they have difficulty in sourcing key products.

#### **6. Will children's temperature be checked on entry?**

No. This is not recommended by government or their advisors. We will only take a temperature if a child reports they are unwell whilst at school.

We ask that families ensure that they keep their children at home if they are exhibiting the symptoms of the virus, which are:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

It is also important that children isolate for 14 days if a member of their household develops COVID-19 symptoms from the first day these symptoms occurred. See the staying at home guidance for households with possible coronavirus [here](#).

#### **7. What information will I get to support my child in preparing for a return to school in September?**

The school have written to parents advising them of the procedures and routines in place and what families can do to help us to keep both children and adults safe in school. We know that children will be excited to see their teachers and friends and we

will ensure they are inducted back into school life so that they understand the new routines and expectations whilst we operate within the COVID-19 period.

**8. Will my child be attending school every day?**

From the autumn term all children will attend every day.

**9. Is school open at the normal times?**

We have put staggered start and finish times.

<b>New year group</b>	<b>Start time</b>	<b>Finish time</b>
Reception	wc 07/09 09:30	11:30
	wc 14/09 09:30	13:30
	wc 21/09 09:00	15:00
Year 1	08:30	15:10
Year 2	08:40	15:20
Year 3	08:50	15:30
Year 4	09:10	15:40
Year 5	09:20	15:50
Year 6	09:30	16:00

**10. Will my child still get a school lunch? How will you ensure that lunchtimes are managed safely?**

Yes your child will still be able to have a school lunch, which will consist of a packed lunch for the first half of the autumn term. If you choose for your child not to have a packed lunch, you will be required to provide one. Packed lunches will be eaten in the classrooms before children have allocated time in the playground over the lunch period.

**11. If my child is not in school, will they still be expected to complete home learning? How will this reflect what is taking place in school?**

From September, if your child is not in school for public health or clinical reasons they will be able to access learning at home through our Home Learning section of the school website. This is the same offer that children in school will be receiving. We understand that the circumstances of every family will be different and therefore only ask that children at home complete the amount of learning that is possible in relation to your family's individual circumstances.

**12. How many staff will be with my child and how will groups be organised?**

From September, children will either be organised into full class groups of a maximum of 30 pupils. Groups will not mix with each other.

**13. Will my child with an Education Health and Care Plan still have 1:1 support all day? Will this be their usual 1:1 support or different people?**

Where possible, we aim to keep staffing consistent.

**14. Will my child have to wear a mask?**

Public Health England does not (based on current evidence) recommend the use of face coverings in primary schools. This evidence will be kept under review. They are not required in primary schools as pupils and staff are mixing in consistent groups, and because misuse may inadvertently increase the risk of transmission. There may also be negative effects on communication and thus education. Face coverings are required at all times on public transport (for children over the age of 11) or when attending a hospital as a visitor or outpatient. You can read the full guidance [here](#).

**15. Will you have coronavirus tests available for pupils?**

All children can be tested, including children under 5, but children aged 11 and under will need to be helped by their parents/carers if using a home testing kit.

Anyone who displays symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) can and should get a test. Tests can be booked online through the NHS testing and tracing for coronavirus website, or ordered by telephone via NHS 119 for those without access to the internet. Essential workers, which includes anyone involved in education or childcare, have priority access to testing.

**16. Will teachers be tested for coronavirus?**

As essential workers, teachers and other staff working in schools, can apply for a test through the NHS Test and Trace scheme if they have coronavirus symptoms. If school staff have symptoms and are due to be in school, they are asked to follow government guidance and self-isolate in accordance with their circumstances. Please see full guidance [here](#). The School maintains a record of staff absences as part of our normal attendance procedures and have adapted this for COVID-19, in accordance with government guidance, in order to support staff on when it is appropriate for them to return.

**17. How will you ensure social distancing? How can lessons be undertaken with social distancing expectations?**

The Government guidance recognises that 'unlike older children and adults, early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff'. We have worked through the hierarchy of measures' as set out in the [guidance: Implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings](#).

Classroom layouts have been adapted to facilitate social distancing with children seated at desks that are all forward-facing in rows. Assemblies will take place virtually. Break times have been staggered to reduce the number of children using the playground and arrangements have been made for playground activities that will ensure social distancing can continue as far as is possible.

From September, groups will be arranged in full class sizes of 30 (maximum), in order to minimise the number of contacts children and staff have. In line with government guidance, staff will maintain a 2 metre distance from pupils and other staff as far as it is practicable. This will not always be possible, particularly when working with younger children. Children who are able to understand the concept will be supported to maintain distance and not touch staff where possible.

**18. What will happen if cases start to rise again?**

We will continue to follow government and local health protection team guidance and direction, and remain in regular communication with the Royal Borough of Greenwich. We will keep our school communities up to date with any changes that may need to be made, giving as much notice as possible.

**19. Who will help children when upset or injured?**

Staff will continue to help children when they are upset or injured.

**20. Will there be a defined protocol for us to follow if a household member develops coronavirus symptoms?**

If a member of your household develops coronavirus symptoms we ask that you inform the school that your child will be absent due to the fact that you will be following the Government's staying at home guidance [here](#).

**21. What are you doing to ensure the school is cleaned regularly? How often will classrooms and halls be cleaned?**

The School is cleaned every day by our contracted cleaning company. We will regularly wipe frequently touched surfaces and handles throughout the day. We are following the Government guidance for cleaning in non- healthcare settings. You can read the full guidance [here](#).

**22. How will you disinfect items that are used by more than one child between use?**

Resources will only be used by one child at a time where this is possible and wiped clean at the end of each day. In the early years resources will be cleaned at the end of each session. The use of resources in the Early Years will be restricted so that these can be cleaned at the end of each day. Hand washing after engaging with equipment will be key in the early years.

From the autumn term, classroom based resources, such as books and games, can be used and shared within the bubble; these will be cleaned regularly. Resources that are shared between classes or bubbles, will be cleaned frequently and carefully and always between bubbles, or rotated to allow them to be left unused and out of reach for a period of 48 hours (72 hours for plastics) between use by different bubbles. Outdoor play equipment will be cleaned frequently and similar rules on hand cleaning, cleaning of the resources and rotation will apply.

**23. How will you manage the use of toilets?**

Staff will supervise handwashing after children have used the toilet.  
Staff will supervise the numbers of children entering and exiting the toilets in order to maintain social distancing as far as is practicable.

**24. How are you going to manage the children at playtime and lunchtime?**

Playtime and lunchtimes will be staggered in order to maintain social distancing as far as possible, but at the same time enabling children to get fresh air and have a break from the classroom. Staff will remind children about how they can interact with their friends on the playground, according to the year group 'bubble' groups that they have been organised into.

**25. How will movement around school work?**

Children will spend the majority of their time in their classroom with individual desks arranged in rows and facing forward from September.

**26. How will you manage dropping off and going home times?**

Specific guidance and times have been shared.

**27. I usually bring my child to school using public transport and don't feel that this is safe. What support will I get in getting my child to school?**

If public transport is your means of bringing your child to school and you do, staggered start and finish times will continue in September to enable more journeys to take place outside of peak travel times, where this is possible. Walking and cycling to school where possible is encouraged. You may find the Government's safer travel guidance for passengers helpful, which you can access [here](#).

**28. Why can't my child continue with online learning until the end of the academic year?**

The Government states 'Returning to school is vital for children's education and for their wellbeing' and that the 'risk to children themselves of becoming severely ill from coronavirus (COVID-19) is very low'.

You can read the full guidance [here](#).

**29. Will you still provide home learning if my child does not attend school due to shielding or isolation?**

Home learning will be provided through our online learning platform. Any children without access to technology will be provided with paper packs. Please ensure that you make the school aware of your situation so that this may be recorded.

**30. How will you ensure all children stick to the rules? Will there be changes to the behaviour policy?**

We recognise that the rules can seem confusing for children and so we will regularly remind them about how to keep themselves safe in school in an age-appropriate way. The format of the school day is also organised so as to best enable pupils to follow the

rules. Our principles, values, expectations and standards of behaviour will remain the same. It is important that children feel that these are consistent. We have adapted our behaviour policy to reflect the current context.

**31. Will the policy on school uniform be relaxed as my child has grown and I'm unable to purchase new?**

Schools will be supportive in all circumstances. Please ensure that you make the school aware of your situation so that this may be recorded.

**32. My child has suffered a bereavement – what support will be available?**

We have a bereavement policy that will guide all staff in situations such as these. We recognise that this could be a very traumatic time for children and families and are fully prepared to support everyone who needs it. This may include signposting or referral to specialist services.

**33. How will the school manage the social, emotional and mental health issues that may arise in this period?**

We have reshaped our curriculum to ensure children are given more time to explore concerns and issues that may arise or have arisen during this crisis.

**34. What will you do if there is a suspected case of Coronavirus in school?**

If a child or adult experiences coronavirus symptoms in school, they will be sent home and advised to follow the [COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection guidance](#). They will be advised to self-isolate for 10 days and to arrange to have a test to see if they have coronavirus, through [NHS.UK/NHS 119](#). Fellow household members should self-isolate for 14 days. The child's parent or staff member will be advised to update the school as soon as they receive the outcome of their test.

If they are awaiting collection, they will be moved, if possible, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door, depending on the age of the individual and with appropriate adult supervision if required. If it is not possible to isolate them, they will be moved to an area which is at least 2 metres away from other people. PPE will be worn by staff caring for the individual while they await collection if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained (such as for a very young child or a child with complex needs). In an emergency we will call 999 if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk.

We will follow the Government guidance [COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings guidance](#) and the Government guidance [COVID-19: implementing protective measures in education settings](#).

**35. What will you do if there is a confirmed case of coronavirus in school?**

If there is a confirmed case in school we will follow the Government guidance and contact the local health protection team. This team would also contact the school directly if there has been a confirmed case through NHS Test and Trace. The health protection team will confirm who was in contact with the person during the period they

were infectious and ensure they are asked to self-isolate. You can read the full guidance [here](#).

## **Arrangements for our Early Years/Reception setting**

### **How we will organise the day**

- Parents will not be able to come into class to settle children
- There will be no messy play that involves hands (e.g. playdough, shaving foam etc)
- Play such as mud kitchen, water and sand will be monitored for hygiene and children.
- Children will be supervised to wash their hands before eating snacks and these will be distributed by their teacher/teaching assistant
- Children will be spaced out as far as possible on the carpet, if space does not allow then use tables will be used
- Children will be supervised to wash their hands regularly, and supported with this by adults and with songs
- Children will be encouraged to spread out during play
- Toys will be cleaned on a daily basis and will not be shared outside of bubble groups. Toys that are difficult to clean have been removed from the classroom
- Children will be talked to about not putting their hands in their mouth, good handwashing, avoiding physical contact