



# Saint Edmund's and Saint Thomas' Catholic Primary School

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1<sup>st</sup> September 2020

Dear Parents,

## **CORONA VIRUS UPDATE 20**

### **Welcome back everybody to the New School Year 2020 2021**

We look forward to welcoming everyone back to the new school year but I should tell you that our newest generation of children (Reception) have already made a head-start and have begun their transition days yesterday.

**As you know from the plans we sent out to every parent on 22nd July**, we have followed guidance to manage risks of transmission and this impacts on traditional routines. Indeed, *we are all in this together* and we rely on your cooperation in every matter of school's risk control. This will be frequently reviewed in relation to local and national circumstances. Copies of these documents will be also placed on the website homepage.

Classes organised in bubbles and groups of classes organised in pods is our approach to social distancing. This is shared by many schools, yet, no two schools are the same and depending on the layout of the school, location of rooms and recreation areas, there will be different emphases on changes to routines. Lunchtime has been a significant concern and that is why we are operating a grab bag / takeaway service. I am sure that this approach will need a little time to settle but know our staff will make it work. Equally, the cashless system will come into effect this term and I am sure that will be beneficial to all and an important step forward in risk management and school efficiency.

All the time we are thinking about how we can reduce congestion, congregation and encourage social distancing. I contacted the council in late July to request signage to limit risk on the road between our field gate (new entrance and exit point for Reception and Year 1) and St John's Primary School. I am pleased to say that they have agreed to this and signs restricting traffic on Denmark Street will be erected shortly. Social distancing is important and we would remind you that only one adult accompanies a child to school and ask you to leave the site as promptly as possible. In the same way as you are asked to wear face masks in supermarkets, we would ask you to apply your mask for the few minutes you are onsite at drop off and pick up. **You protect yourself and others and support our efforts**. Our primary school children will **not** be required to wear masks and this message has been repeated by government and Public Health England.

Some have asked where there is a gap in staggered start times between children and their siblings, if they can all be dropped off together. I am afraid that I have to ask you to adhere strictly to the published times, otherwise 'exceptional cases will grow rapidly in number and undermine the whole social distancing objective.

Other recent queries regarding pupils having the option of uniform or PE kits has a very simple rationale. There will be no changing of clothes in school and some parents may wish to wash uniform frequently so you have flexibility to dress your child in either type of clothing. Regarding trainer shoes, there is no requirement for them to be of a certain colour. These measures are **temporary**. Our overarching aim is to get our children back to school and catching up from wherever they left off! Swimming will be postponed this term until we are clear about risk assessment and controls and we will update you should the position change.

Your child is asked **not** to bring their bike or scooter to school until further notice as the location of the bike shed presents difficulties with the new drop off and collection arrangements in the context of social distancing.

If you do keep your child off school due to Covid-19 symptoms please ensure that you let us know this when you register your child's absence. If your child is absent due to isolation or virus, school will provide school work, so they can keep up their studies. If your child presents Covid-19 symptoms in school we will take your child to a safe area in school and contact you immediately to pick them up. **Please make sure that your emergency contact details are up to date and correct.**

It is vitally important that anyone who presents with Covid-19 symptoms get tested as soon as possible.

If someone from within school is confirmed with Covid-19 we will get in touch with the parents and carers of any children who have been in close contact with this person. This is likely to be children from their class or 'bubble' or if they have been in close contact through other groups. These children will be asked to self-isolate for 14 days.

In the meantime, please remember to read through the parent booklet and I look forward to see many of you on Friday at drop off times but accept it will be impossible to be in three places at once!

Many thanks, once again, for your kind co-operation and support and let the recovery of pupils' progress commence!

Yours sincerely,



Kieran A Loftus Headteacher