

## **Parent and Carer Guidance for School Re-Opening**

Thorncombe St Mary's as a school is reopening to all children after the period of national lockdown and we are looking forward to welcoming everybody back.

To ensure the building is ready for opening, we will be carrying out a series of health and safety checks in line with county expectations to ensure the environment is ready for the children to use. Where possible (weather and temperature dependent) classroom/learning spaces will have windows and doors open.

### **Cleaning and Hygiene**

Classroom/learning environments will be cleaned throughout the day. This will be at morning break and at lunchtime to include frequently touched surfaces such as tables, door handles, equipment, toilets and sinks. This additional cleaning will complement the deeper cleaning that will happen before the start of each school day in preparation for the entry of children and staff. We have sourced a new County endorsed COVID-19 deep-cleaning product that will be used as part of the cleaning schedule and staff will be provided with adequate PPE to carry out this additional cleaning.

We have ensured that we have ordered in adequate soap, tissues and antibacterial hand gel. We already have hand gel wall dispensers around the building, and we have ensured that we have adequate stocks of hand sanitiser to replenish it when needed.

We have several classroom/learning environment bins with pedal operated lids to ensure the safe disposal of tissues and other waste, and these bins will be situated in each room used by children and staff.

We have displayed Government recommended posters around the school to remind the children of good hygiene practices. Children will continue to wash their hands at regular intervals throughout the school day and when entering their classroom/learning environment. Class adults will be supervising, teaching and reinforcing correct handwashing and basic hygiene expectations.

### **Moving around the school**

Due to the nature of our school building and the numbers of children and adults we have decided that we will operate as one "bubble", but we will be operating in smaller groups for the majority of the school day, including lessons and lunchtime. Movement around the school building by children will be kept to a minimum, with the exception of morning and after-lunch break periods, when they will be accompanied by staff members who will ensure that guidelines are adhered to.

Pippin Class (Reception, Year 1 and 2 children) attending school will be using Pippin classroom. They will access the school one at a time via the blue doors, where they will be met by their teacher, leave their belongings in the cloakroom and then wash their hands before entering the classroom. They will then proceed to their classroom and will not access any other area within the school apart from outdoor spaces, which they will access through the door at the back of the classroom.

Orchard Class (Key Stage 2) children will be using their classrooms as their learning base. They will access the school one at a time via the blue doors, leave their belongings in the cloakroom and wash their hands before proceeding to their classroom.

Classroom furniture will be spaced apart where possible and children will sit in rows for lessons and lunch. Pippin class children will have their own space in their classroom. All children will be encouraged to keep their distance where it is possible and appropriate to their age and understanding.

We will hold regular Collective Worship in each class.

### **Attendance**

Attendance at school from 8<sup>th</sup> March will be compulsory for all children.

We do understand that some children may be anxious about returning, given the length of time since they have been at school. Please let us know if this is the case so that we can engage with you and support you to help your child attend. While the current situation has brought many challenges, we want children to feel happy and confident returning to school and continuing their learning journeys.

We do ask that you let us know as soon as possible if your child is not going to come in as usual. This is especially important as we need to report any potential COVID-19 symptoms and ensure that families and staff can access testing as soon as possible, in line with Government guidance. (Please see further down this document for further details and links)

### **Practical steps to reduce risks**

To minimise risk as much as possible, and to adhere to Government recommendations, we have established routines and protocols throughout the school day, which will be familiar to children and staff from our return to school in September 2020.

### **Arrival at school**

All children should arrive between **8.30** and **8.45am**. If children are being dropped by car, drivers should park in the car park and the driver/parent should not get out of the car. If walking, children should follow the marked route on the pavement round the car park up to school. One child at a time should enter the school building. They will be met at the door by a member of staff who will manage the children's entry and social distancing markers will be placed at the gate in order to create a small queue if several children arrive together.

For Key Stage One children, one parent should walk their child up to the gate if necessary. The teacher on duty will help children to leave their belongings in the cloakroom and wash their hands before going to their classroom. If Key Stage 2 children are unable to come into school independently to begin with, one parent can accompany them until they are confident enough to do this by themselves. Parents may be asked to follow a one-way system in order to manage this safely. Please ensure your child has been welcomed by a member of staff before leaving.

All parents should wear masks/face coverings while on the school grounds.

### **Collection from school**

All children should be collected at 3.15pm. Parents should wait in their cars rather than approaching the school building or if walking, wait in an appropriately socially distanced position on

the pavement in the car park. Children will then be brought out to the car park through the doors by the office and released by the supervising staff member once their parent or nominated adult has been seen.

These measures are being taken to limit the number of adults entering our school site and is in line with Government guidance. The staff members working with your child will greet and release them at the start and end of the day. Children will only be released when their adult is identified. Children will need to ensure they have a completed walking home alone consent form if you do not plan to collect them and supervise them from school.

We acknowledge that this is potentially going to be difficult for some children, especially our youngest children, but would ask for your help in preparing them for this significant change. If this change becomes too difficult on a particular day and your child is struggling to leave you then it may be necessary for you to take them home and try again the next day.

When you arrive at the school, we ask that you abide by the Government's social distancing measures and remain apart from other families. Please do not gather around the school gates and please remain in cars or wait a sensible distance away from each other. Please note that school staff are unable to enforce social distancing measures beyond our school environment so we cannot get involved with parental concern regarding social distancing at the school gates. We can only ask you to respect other people's wishes to socially distance from each other.

Both classes will have the same break and lunchtimes, but we have allocated different areas for the two groups. Pippin Class children will be able to access the lower playground and the grass near the pirate ship while Orchard Class will be able to access the school field, basketball area behind the kitchen and the gardening area.

Children will eat lunch in their assigned classroom base or outside, weather and space permitting.

### **School Meals**

Local Food Links will continue to deliver hot food for lunch. Please ensure you order meals for your children, if required, 7 days before they return to school. Children can also bring in their own packed lunches if you prefer.

We will also be able to offer the usual free fruit and vegetable snack to Key Stage 1 at break time. Key Stage 2 children may bring in a piece of fruit if they wish.

Please note that water fountains will not be in use at this time – children should bring in their own full water bottles each day. They are welcome to bring two water bottles if they wish.

### **Books and Resources**

Children will be allocated their own stationery pack to use when they return. These will be named to ensure that children are using the same resources on a daily basis.

Although we will be operating primarily as one bubble, resources will not be shared between classes, but they may be shared within class bubbles e.g. science equipment.

Reading books can be taken home, but when brought back to school they will be quarantined for an appropriate length of time before being offered to other children.

Resources will be wiped down with sanitiser after use, e.g. iPads and laptops, PE equipment and play resources.

Children may bring in a rucksack or book bag, water bottle and lunch box to school if they need one, as well as their outdoor coat. Please keep all items brought into school to a minimum.

Children should come in to school dressed in their PE kit on the days they have PE so that they do not have to change in school. They may wear tracksuit bottoms or shorts depending on the temperature and weather conditions.

Orchard Class will have PE on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Pippin Class will have PE on Thursdays and ....

### **Uniform and Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)**

We ask that all children attend school in full uniform, except on the days they have PE (see above).

In line with the Government guidelines children will be accessing outdoor spaces as much as possible. With this in mind please ensure they are equipped for the weather. E.g. coats, sunhats, and application of sun cream before school. Children may bring in sun cream in a named bag.

Alongside other schools in the MAT, staff have the option to wear masks around communal areas although they will not be worn in classroom settings. This is in line with the Government guidance.

We will not be taking children's temperatures at school as general practice. However, if we have any concerns about a child, we may contact you to ask permission to take their temperature if we suspect they may be unwell, in line with our usual first aid practice.

### **Social Distancing**

We have all become very accustomed to the term social distancing and, out of transparency; this is the aspect of the reopening that will be the hardest to manage.

Although we will be operating as one "bubble", we will work in smaller groups for the majority of the school day which will minimise the number of people who come into contact with another. This, in addition to increased cleaning and handwashing, all helps to prevent the potential spread of the virus.

The Government guidance acknowledges that it is very difficult to ensure social distancing with Primary aged children, and achieving this with the young children in Pippin class will be particularly challenging.

Staff at Thorncombe St Mary's cannot guarantee that the children on site will always be 1m+ apart from each other and it would be wrong of us to state anything different - if a child needs first aid or needs help with intimate care, for example. But in line with the Government guidance and the other preventative measures we have put in place, as well as the commitment to adhere to social distancing wherever possible, we believe we have done everything we can to minimise the risk.

### **Visitors onto the school site**

Visitors will only be allowed access to the school site in emergencies e.g. a leaking roof. We will always endeavour to arrange appointments on site after the school has closed if needed.

The school office will be open but not for face to face contact. Please pass messages on by a phone call/answerphone message or by email to the school email address.

Parents will not be able to enter the school cloakroom or reception areas.

School staff will be limiting face-to-face contact with parents and families wherever possible, and the majority of contact needs to be via phone or email if needed. In line with the Government guidance, parents will only be able to enter the school site by appointment or invitation. Items that are left by a child at the end of a day will have to be collected the next day, or after the weekend if left on a Friday. Once released at the end of a day, children will not be able to re-access the school site.

### **Pupil Wellbeing**

The situation we have all had to face regarding COVID-19 has been very difficult and the staff at Thorncombe St Mary's are very aware that this may have caused mental health or wellbeing difficulties for some of our children.

Staff are aware that among the children returning, there will be children who may have found the extended period at home difficult; some may have heightened anxiety about the virus; some may have experienced the virus first-hand with family members and all children will have noticed a dramatic change to their usual routine.

To acknowledge these factors, school adults will ensure that the returning children have regular opportunities to share their feelings and concerns and to talk about their experiences. The children will have the opportunity to have some individual time with a trusted adult and the curriculum offer will include pastoral and wellbeing activities, which will reinforce staying safe and wellbeing.

We have been in regular contact with families this term but if you have any issues you need to discuss with us prior to your child's return to school, please contact us.

### **IMPORTANT: Child/Staff illness: including COVID-19 and other illnesses**

If a child or member of staff develops symptoms of COVID-19 – a new and persistent cough, high temperature, loss of or change in their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia) then they must remain at home and self-isolate for 10 days and arrange to have a test to see if they have coronavirus (COVID-19). They should also engage with NHS Track and Trace.

Members of the same household should self-isolate for 10 days. All staff, children, and families attending school on site are eligible for COVID-19 testing if they develop symptoms. This can be booked by using the following online link: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/> or by calling 119.

If a child or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, the rest of the group in contact with that child/member of staff will be sent home immediately and will be asked to self-isolate for 10 days.

Other household members of any of this group do not need to self-isolate unless the child in their immediate family goes on to develop COVID-19 symptoms.

If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 at the school, Public Health England's Local Protection Team will conduct an investigation and advise the school on the best action to take. In some cases, this might mean closure of other groups within the setting or a total closure. At Thorncombe St Mary's, we will endeavour to follow infection prevention to the best of our ability to reduce the risk of total closure.

If a child develops symptoms of COVID-19 on site (a continuous cough, high temperature or anosmia), they will be sent home immediately, be asked to self-isolate and to get a test as soon as possible. While the child is waiting to be collected, an adult who, in this situation, will wear PPE, will supervise them. This is in line with the Government guidance. They will be moved to a different room, which is away from other teaching groups, and windows will be open for ventilation.

The staff member that has supervised this child will not need to go home, unless they develop symptoms or if the child tests positive for COVID-19. The room will be cleaned thoroughly when the child leaves the site. The rest of the child's group will only be told of this possible COVID-19 case if the child who was sent home tests positive.

If your child develops any other illness, e.g. sickness, then the normal 48-hour rules apply. As a temporary change due to the COVID-19 situation and to minimise risk we won't be able to administer medicines to your child. This is due to items needing to go between home and school and the uncertainty surrounding the symptoms your child may be presenting. The only exception will be inhalers and we ask that an inhaler is brought in on the first day of attendance, if not already in school, and remains in school. Emergency medication that we already have in school and have training for will remain as usual.

### **Breakfast Club and After School Club**

We will send out information about our wraparound provision next week. Once details have been finalised, we will contact parents.

### **Signposting to Government Guidance**

If you would like to read any of the Government Guidance that we have used in our planning and decision-making please access this via the following internet links:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>