

ST MARY THE VIRGIN CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Hartfield, East Sussex, TN7 4AA



Learning with Love, Strength and Faith, following the example of Jesus

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Thursday 15th October 2020

Dear St Mary the Virgin CEP Families,

Key Stage 'bubbles' and adaptations for Term 2

We are writing to update you on the adaptations we are making for Term 2 to continue safely allowing all of our children and staff to be in school.

Firstly, we would like to say how incredibly proud we are of all the children for the smooth transition they made back into school this year. They have shown how resilient and determined they are by continuing to be positive and enthusiastic in all their learning, despite the disruption to their education last academic year, and the changes they have faced this year. Thank you for all your support in getting the children back into their routines and for your patience with the extra precautions we have had to have in place for drop-off and pick-up.

Since we reopened in June, there have been safety measures in place to ensure that different bubbles of children do not mix. This has meant that break times, lunch times, drop-offs and pick-ups have all been more difficult to logistically manage but have worked as a short-term solution. However, we are now in the position where these extra precautions need to be in place long-term. To ensure that all staff, families and other members of our community are kept as safe as possible, we will be making some changes to the organisation of the school day.

After the half-term break, we will be creating two new 'bubbles' of children. Children in Reception – Year 2 will become the 'Key Stage 1 bubble' and children in Years 3 – 6 will become the 'Key Stage 2 bubble'. This mirrors what is happening in larger schools where whole year groups are part of the same 'bubble' – e.g. in local three form-entry schools, Year 6 are in one 'bubble', totalling around 90 children; in Secondary schools, the year group 'bubbles' are up to 120 children. The new 'Key Stage bubbles' at St Mary's will be between less than 60 children each. Years 1 – 6 also use the same toilets and, whilst every effort is made to ensure different 'bubbles' are not in there at the same time, some cross-over is inevitable. Creation of these new bubbles will mean that drop-offs and pick-ups become much simpler and the children can once again play and socialise with those who are not necessarily in their classes. Having two 'bubbles' of children, instead of the current four, will make organising playtimes, lunchtimes and shared equipment much easier and we will once again be able to allow the children to use the trim trail, pirate ship and other shared areas of the school on a rota. It will also considerably reduce teacher workload.

Any decision we take when organising the logistics of how our school runs is considered very carefully, with discussion with the staff and governors of our school, and the advantages and disadvantages deliberated. This decision does not come without its risks and we recognise that by having larger groups of children together, a positive test result could mean more children needing to self-isolate for two weeks. However, in discussions with the Local Authority (and local schools who have had positive cases) **this is not definite** and should a positive test result occur, we will work closely with the Department for Education and our local Health Protection Team to establish which groups may be affected. Our risk assessment has been updated and is on our [website](#) for your information. The children will only mix with those not in their classes outside on the playground and still sit separately in the lunch hall, with reminders to wash their hands regularly and keep their distance from those not in their 'bubble'.

The new drop-off and pick-up arrangements are detailed below. Please note the pick-up time for Reception – Year 2 is now 3:00pm. Siblings in Key Stage 2 are encouraged to stay in school until 3:15pm where possible and where parents can wait safely. Please be



strict with these timings to ensure the safety of all families and staff. Please be careful to remain 1m+ away from any other parents and staff as much as possible, particularly whilst waiting to drop off or pick up your child.

Drop-off: between 8:40am – 8:50am

Government guidance: <i>Schools should consider staggered starts or adjusting start and finish times to keep groups apart as they arrive and leave school. Staggered start and finish times should not reduce the amount of overall teaching time.</i>	
Maple	Coming into the lower gate by Maple Class.
Cherry	Coming into the lower gate by Maple Class.
Willow	Through the side front door (round the right side of the school – the old front door).
Lilac	Through the side front door (round the right side of the school – the old front door).

There will be a member of staff on each of the two entrances ensuring that the children apply hand sanitiser before coming into their classrooms.

Pick-up: 3:00pm (KS1) or 3:15pm (KS2)

Government guidance: <i>Schools should consider staggered starts or adjusting start and finish times to keep groups apart as they arrive and leave school. Staggered start and finish times should not reduce the amount of overall teaching time.</i>	
Maple	Pick up at 3:00pm from the lower gate by Maple Class.
Cherry	Pick up at 3:00pm from the playground gate.
Willow	Pick up at 3:15pm from the side front door (round the right side of the school – the old front door).
Lilac	Pick up at 3:15pm from outdoor prayer space at the front of the school.

Again, thank you for your patience and support whilst we continue to adapt to the ever-changing circumstances and guidance.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,


Mr A Brundle
Chair of Governors


Mr J Procter
Executive Headteacher


Miss B Hare
Head of School