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Welcoming You Back To St. Peter's for September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I do hope that you have had a restful and relaxed summer break, with some normality returned to allow us all to have had some summer fun and time with friends and families once more.

As you will be aware, I am pleased to report that the Government's guidance released just before the summer holidays began has not been significantly changed and we are able to move forward with our plans for reopening to Year 3 on the afternoon of Wednesday 2nd September and for the whole school on Thursday 3rd September.

I cannot tell you how much we are looking forward to having the children back at St Peter's!

The 'Class Bubbles' and 'Super Bubbles'

As I stressed in my end of term letter, the goal for us is that school will feel normal for the children.

We will be introducing the class bubble system - each class will be its own bubble. Typically, at St Peter's this means that bubbles will have around 30 children with their teacher and their TA. Because of the importance of children being taught the full curriculum, the guidance makes it clear that our specialist teachers, our art and drama, sport and music teachers, can teach across these bubbles. I am so glad that this is the case as the outstanding quality of our broad and rich curriculum is part of what makes St Peter's so special!

We will of course remain vigilant - children will wash or sanitise hands (using alcohol based hand gel) as they come into school, as they move between lessons, before, and after lunchtimes and playtimes. We will keep the sharing of commonly used resources to a minimum and will provide all children with their own stationary and equipment that they will need each day. To help limit what comes between home and school each day we ask that children don't bring pencil cases in – we will make sure they have everything they need. We will also be continuing with the routine of additional cleaning of the school building and commonly used touch-points through the school day.

We will also divide the school into two overarching bubbles – Super-Bubbles! – with Years 3 and 4 in the Lower Bubble and Years 5 and 6 in the Upper Bubble. We are doing this to help minimise contact between the different groups of children. We will be having separate playtimes, different lunchtimes and even different afterschool clubs for these Upper and Lower School Bubbles.

Well-Being

We know that some children will be a little nervous about coming into school after being away for so long, and we know that every family has had a huge variety of different challenges and experiences to deal with through these last 6 months. At St Peter's we take everyone's well-being very seriously and we will be ensuring that each and every child settles in to school positively and with confidence.

Start and Finish Times

The gates front and back will be opened at 8.35am and children can walk round to their classes, with gates and registers closing at 8.55am as normal. Parents can self-regulate their arrival and minimise crowding.

For those collecting children at the end of the day we will again open gates slightly earlier at 3.05pm and we will ask parents to wait behind the marked green and white line surrounding the school. We are very lucky that our school building gives each and every class their own exit and entrance. Please remember to keep social distance and respect others' personal space while you wait for teachers to release the children when they see you waiting for them at the end of the school day.

Children in the Upper School who have written parental permission to go home on their own will be able to do so again – the new permission slips will be sent home next week.

Clubs and Extended Services

We will be opening our Breakfast Club, After School Clubs and Extended Day provision in September.

I know how needed these are for our working parents and how much they are enjoyed by our children.

These will operate in our Super Bubbles - the clubs will be specifically set up for children from the Year 3 and 4 Super-Bubble **or** children from the Year 5 and 6 Super-Bubble.

On 1st September, you will receive an electronic brochure and link allowing you to sign up for these clubs – no paper copies or sign-up sheets will be available to minimise risk.

If you are planning on using Breakfast Club or Extended Day you will need to book your child a space using School Gateway. To be able to book if your child hasn't been before, you will need to contact Mr Bewick on extendedservices@stpetersthanet.co.uk as soon as possible to be added to the relevant group.

To our new Year 3 parents, you will not be able to book your extended services sessions until 1st September, as this is your child's official start date with us. Our systems need to update on this date, then you will be able to book.

The school is now cashless

Just as we will now be sending club selections electronically to minimise risk, we will no longer be accepting cash transactions.

Many parents already use our *School Gateway* Communication and Payments system (website and free app available). I must now insist that you all use this to minimise risk, particularly for the office team who would usually handle cash from many different households. We want to keep them safe and sound!

For more information on how to use this system, please see the information and step by step guide on our website -

<https://www.stpetersthanet.co.uk/page/?title=Payments+and+Paying+Online&pid=111>

Year 3 parents – please note this will also be updated once your child officially joins us on 1st September, please try to register after this date. New parents – and our existing ones too! – can always contact the office if there are any difficulties getting used to our systems.

In the spirit of keeping everyone safe can I ask that you try to communicate with the office by phone or email as much as possible.

School Lunches

I am very glad to say that we will be offering hot school meals again.

Our lunchtime arrangements for hot meals in the hall will operate in much the same way as they previously have, an upper and lower school seating timetable (the super bubble system). If your child would prefer a packed lunch, these will be eaten in their classrooms, as per our normal lunchtime routine. Handwashing will take place before and after the children eat their lunch.

School meal prices have risen this year to the new price of **£2.25 per meal, £11.25 for the week.**

This must now be paid via the School Gateway system; a new payment option will be available for you to top up your school meal payment online.

Possible Covid Symptoms

I must urge you to be alert for possible symptoms and it is important that you inform the school straight away should your child have a temperature, a new continuous cough or a sudden loss of taste and smell. We really do know that for the most part these symptoms will mean nothing worse than a normal cough or cold - but it is vital that any child or a family member displaying symptoms follow national procedure and get tested immediately.

If a child in a bubble tests positive, it is the law that they stay at home and that their bubble will be sent home and will self-isolate for 14 days. Parents and family members will not have to self-isolate for this time unless their child also tests positive. The hand washing, hygiene routines, class bubbles and super-bubbles are all put in place to help minimise the risk of this happening.

If a class bubble does have to self-isolate for 14 days we have prepared a two week block of home learning for each class in the style the children became so familiar with at the end of last year. Each class will be shown the best ways of accessing this learning and sharing their work with their teacher so that any home learning that has to take place will blend smoothly with their work in school.

And finally... New Year 3 Welcome Afternoon

I am really looking forward to welcoming our new Year 3s for their Transition afternoon, to meet their teachers and classmates and see the school before the rest of the children start back. This will be on the afternoon of Wednesday 2nd September at 1.30-3pm.

We will welcome all children back on Thursday 3rd September - with our new system of gates being open from 8.35am. I can't wait to see you all!

Yours,

Tim Hunter-Whitehouse
Headteacher
St Peter-in-Thamet