



St. Charles RCVA Primary School  
Durham Road  
Spennymoor  
Co Durham  
DL16 6SL

Executive Head Teacher: Miss Mary Tate  
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1<sup>st</sup> September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

### Welcome Back to School

I hope this finds you well and you have enjoyed a lovely summer holiday.

We look forward to welcoming children in Y1-6 back to school on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September. Children joining the Reception Class will start full time on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September and have their transition visit this week.

In preparing to welcome back children, we have put in place protocols, risk assessments and contingency plans which follow the regular safety updates both from the government and from Durham County Council.

The full version of the government's advice on 28<sup>th</sup> August on the reopening of schools in September can be accessed through this link: [Guidance for full opening: schools - GOV.UK.](#)

In planning to reopen St Charles School to all pupils on Thursday, we have followed the government advice and put in place control measures to ensure:

parents and staff are aware of the symptoms of coronavirus and that people who are ill stay at home and do not attend school (web link: [guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection.](#)

- robust hand and respiratory hygiene: *Catch it, bin it, kill it*
- enhanced cleaning arrangements
- active engagement with NHS Test and Trace (web link: [testing and tracing for coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#))
- contacts are reduced between those in school where possible and the potential for contamination is minimised so far as is reasonably practical

How contacts are reduced will (as much as possible) include:

- grouping children together in bubbles
- avoiding contact between groups
- arranging classrooms with forward facing desks
- staff maintaining distance from pupils and other staff as much as possible

The symptoms of coronavirus are: (web link: [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) symptoms](#))

- high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

### Bubbles

In order to minimise the number of contacts in school, children will form their own class bubble. These groups will be kept separate for most of the day and will have their own staggered timings for start and end of day and for breaktimes.

The organisation of small groups can restrict the normal operation of a school and present both an educational and logistical challenges, including the cleaning and use of shared spaces, such as playgrounds, dining halls and toilets. In the guidance to schools for the autumn term, maintaining consistent groups remains important, but given the decrease in the prevalence of coronavirus (COVID-19) and the resumption of the full range of curriculum subjects, schools are able to change the emphasis on bubbles within their system of controls and increase the size of these groups.



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At break times and lunch times, two partner classes will share the playground and eat lunch together either in the dining hall or in the classroom. Each playground has been divided up with painted central lines, allowing both classes to play alongside each other. In the dining hall, zones have been set up to separate the bubbles.

### **Dropping off and Picking up**

In order to keep the number of adults coming onto the school site to a minimum, we ask that only one adult per family does the drop off and pick up. We will have a strict one-way system running around the school site which all parents and children must adhere to at the beginning and end of the day. Parents should not cross paths with each other but must follow the path all the way to the exit. At the end of the day, children will stand outside the classroom doors with their teacher and will join their parents on the playground for the handover.

### **Drop off arrangements**

Children in all year groups can arrive at school and will be welcomed into their classrooms between 8:40am and 8.55am each day with lessons starting at 9am promptly. We will use two entrances each morning:

- Main gates for Reception, Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3
- Den entrance for Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6

A member of staff will be on duty at each set of gates from 8.40am and staff will help direct children to their classroom. Parents should leave the school site immediately after dropping off and pick up and not linger to catch up with other parents.

### **End of day arrangements**

**Reception:** Parents should collect their children at **2.45pm** from the classroom entrance, waiting on the main path, maintaining a safe distance from each other, and then follow the one-way system around the school playground. To assist parents who also have children in older classes, children can be collected at the later time of 2.55pm (for siblings in 3,4,5,6) or 3.05pm (for siblings in Y1 and Y2).

**Year 1 and Year 2:** classes will open their doors to dismiss children at **3.10pm**. Parents should wait on the KS1 playground, maintaining a safe distance from each other, then follow the one-way system around the school playground.

**Year 3 and Year 4:** classes will open their doors to dismiss children at **3pm**. Parents should wait on the KS2 playground area, maintaining a safe distance from each other, then follow the one-way system around the school playground. Parents who also have children in Year 1 and Year 2, can collect their child at the later time of 3.10pm.

**Year 5 and Year 6:** classes will open their doors to dismiss children at **3pm**. Parents should wait outside the Eco classroom area, maintaining a safe distance from each other, then follow the one-way system.

### **School Uniform**

Pupils are expected to wear **full school uniform** at St Charles'. Uniforms do not need to be cleaned any more often than usual, nor do they need to be cleaned using methods which are different from normal. Our School Uniform consists of the following:

- Bottle green sweatshirt, cardigan or school hoodie
- White or green shirt/polo-shirt
- Grey trousers, grey pinafore or skirt
- Plain black shoes
- Girls may choose to wear a green gingham dress in the summer and boys' grey shorts.

### **Bags and Bottles**

As cloakrooms will not yet be in use, we ask that pupils only bring essential items to school with them. These are typically, a coat, clearly labelled water bottle and a packed lunch in a disposable bag. We will provide the children with all items of stationary and a clear plastic wallet for taking homework and reading books home.



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On **PE days**, pupils can come to school dressed in their outdoor PE kit to avoid the need to change clothes or bring bags to school.

This kit should be:

- Black or navy blue jogging /tracksuit bottoms
- Green school sweatshirt or green school hoody
- White t shirt or polo shirt
- black or white training shoes (not neon or brightly multi coloured)

### School Lunches

All pupils in Key Stage 1 are all eligible for a free school meal and pupils in Key Stage 2 can purchase a school meal for £2.10 per day. Parents can pay for school meals using Parent Pay unless your child is entitled to free school meals. Children may of course opt to bring a packed lunch in from home in a disposable bag.

### Attendance

From 1<sup>st</sup> September, attendance is mandatory for all pupils and the usual rules on school attendance will apply, including:

- parents' duty to secure that their child attends regularly at school
- 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

### Breakfast Club Provision

This provision will restart on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September from 7.45am. Pupils should be accompanied to school by an adult and brought into the school hall through the den entrance. Please ensure you book your child's place in advance by emailing or calling the school office on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> September. It is vital that parents book their places in advance so that we can plan for numbers and groupings. The cost of breakfast club will be £2 per day and this is payable in advance using your Parent Pay account.

### Face Masks in Schools

Parents will be aware from the media that the government issued guidance to secondary schools last week on the use of facemasks in the event of a local lockdown. Secondary school headteachers can use their discretion in applying this guidance should they deem it necessary outside of local lockdowns. The guidance states that pupils from Y7 upwards may wear facemasks when transitioning between lessons, in busy corridors, where social distancing cannot be maintained, but not in classrooms, in outdoor spaces or when eating lunch in the dining room. There is no recommendation for primary age pupils to wear facemasks. The full text of the guidance on facemasks in secondary schools can be accessed through this link: [Face coverings in education settings](#).

### Protocol and contingency plans for local lockdown

In the event of a local outbreak and subsequent lockdown, Public Health England health protection team or Durham local authority may advise schools to close temporarily to help control transmission. This may involve a return to remaining open only for vulnerable children and the children of critical workers and providing remote education for all other pupils. Parents will be kept informed through the media, the school website and Parent mail should this be necessary.

With all good wishes,

Miss M. Tate  
Executive Headteacher