



# ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

HEADTEACHER – Miss NICOLA SLACK

BA (Hons), MEd, PGCE, PPQH

Buckfast Road, Buckfast, South Devon TQ11 0EA

Tel: 01364 642389 Fax: 01364 644066

Email: [admin@st-marysrc.devon.sch.uk](mailto:admin@st-marysrc.devon.sch.uk) Website: [www.st-marysrc.devon.sch.uk](http://www.st-marysrc.devon.sch.uk)

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> May

Dear Parents / Carers

## Re-opening of schools for Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 pupils

We hope that you and your family are well and coping in these challenging and unprecedented times. Our school has been open for the children of key workers and vulnerable children since the lockdown began on 23<sup>rd</sup> March, and staff have been supporting the home learning of children who have not been in school. We are very grateful to you for the support that you have provided for your child /children over this difficult period. Following the government's announcement of its intention to begin the phased opening of schools from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020, Plymouth CAST Multi Academy Trust has taken the following decisions about the opening of its schools.

Plymouth CAST will only consider the opening of its schools once invited to do so by the government on or after 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2020, and once the government's five tests for moving to the next phase have been satisfied. Furthermore, each of our schools is required to complete a comprehensive risk assessment and planning process that will be approved by the Headteacher, Trust Education and Standards Manager, and Trust Director of Education before it is authorised to open.

The Trust will continue to work with our school leaders, staff, professional associations, Local Authorities, the Regional Schools Commissioner and government to ensure that the re-opening of our schools takes place at the right time and in the right way for the health, welfare and safety of our children, students and staff.

After careful consideration and extensive discussion, the Trust has directed its schools to begin its phased opening in the following way:

- In-school care provision for the children of key workers and vulnerable children from all year groups will continue.
- Any model of opening must include Year Six
- Where it is safe to do so provision must include Nursery, Reception and Year 1, or any safe combination of these year groups.
- No year group other than those specified by the government, N, R, Y1 and Y6 is able to return to school at this stage.

It is important to note that the Trust's directive and the local planning decisions of the school may change due to guidance from the government, the Local Authority, Public Health England, and other appropriate agencies. The government's date of 1<sup>st</sup> June for the phased re-opening of schools is only provisional and subject to the nature of the pandemic and national control measures as we approach that date.

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## Specific arrangements for St Mary's, Buckfast

To implement government guidance that relates to the safety of our staff and pupils, there will need to be some changes made to the school day, which I outline below.

1. Although the government acknowledge that Early Years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain strictly two metres apart from each other and from staff, to encourage social distancing (and in line with government policy) pupils will be taught in groups of no more than fifteen pupils. Pupils will only mix with staff and pupils from their group throughout the day and, where possible, throughout the week, to limit the spread of infection.
2. To enable social distancing, parents / carers will need to drop off their children at the top of the school path from **8.40am**. Older pupils may walk down the path independently, but younger pupils will be met at the grey gate to the field and accompanied into school by school staff.
3. To minimise social contact in the car park and on the path at the end of the school day, we will stagger the finish time of the school day. **With effect from Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June, until further notice:-**

**Meldon and Venford (Y1) pupils will need to be collected at 3.00pm** (those with older siblings attending school may be collected at 3.30pm)

**Burrator pupils (Y6) and the pupils of key workers or vulnerable children, will finish their school day at 3.30pm.**

Pupils will walk up to the field with staff, where they can be collected by parents / carers and taken home. **Children will not be allowed to play on the field after school.**

Those pupils who use school transport may have different end of day arrangements to others in their year group. These will be confirmed with individual parents / carers, once the school has received confirmation from Devon School Transport.

4. Whilst in school, the following infection protection measures will also be implemented:
  - pupils will be reminded about good hand hygiene and the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach will be reinforced
  - pupils will be asked to wash their hands throughout the day and specifically: when entering the school building, before and after eating, before and after going outside
  - hand sanitiser will be available throughout school and used at regularly intervals
  - frequently touched surfaces will be regularly and routinely cleaned by staff throughout the school day
  - pupils in each 'zone' will use specific toilets, allocated to their class
  - a one-way system will be implemented in school (where possible)
  - break times will be staggered so children only mix with those children in their 'zone'
  - lunch will be eaten in the classroom with members of their class
  - book bags do not need to be brought into school and reading books will not be sent home (children will read in school to an adult)

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5. A packed lunch (provided by school) can be ordered from 1<sup>st</sup> June. These will need to be ordered in advance and so parents / carers will need to let the school know if they would like to order one.
6. According to government guidance, wearing a face mask in schools and other settings is not recommended. Personal protective equipment (PPE) will however be worn by those carrying out intimate care needs, medical needs or if looking after any children who become unwell with symptoms of coronavirus. Any child who becomes unwell during the day will be swiftly isolated and parents called to arrange collection. The school will follow government guidance in all circumstances.
7. As parents / carers are will not be accessing the school building, if you would like to speak to your child's class teacher, please contact the school to arrange a telephone consultation.

I appreciate that there is a lot of information outlined in this letter and that the changes mean that the school experience at St Mary's will be significantly different this term.

Further details of government guidance can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>. These measures will serve to protect staff and pupils, moving forward in these difficult times.

Please feel free to contact the school should you wish to discuss anything further outlined in this letter.

We are very grateful to you for your support and understanding as we try to manage this situation in the best interests of our children, families, staff and the national COVID-19 recovery plan.

Yours sincerely

*R Friel*

Raymond Friel  
CEO, Plymouth CAST

*N A Slack*

Nicola Slack  
Headteacher

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