



Essex County Council
St Michael's C of E Primary School

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Wednesday, 26 August 2020

Dear Parents,

I am sure that you have heard much about schools returning next week and may have some questions and concerns. Virtually all of what I set out before the summer holiday remains the same despite lots of speculation in the media and at Government level, some changing policies; what I can say is that the measures we have considered are fit for our purpose at St. Michael's and if everyone follows these, then we should be able to keep everyone healthy and school open. If things change before our return, I will update you but otherwise I hope this answers most points.

At some point over the break, I heard a very sensible discussion about how when schools return, the key concern is about how the adults then conduct themselves as this is most likely how transmission rates will rise. Already, in other countries that opened schools before England, schools have had to close and therefore to avoid this, the basics of hand hygiene and social distancing are vital. We can control what happens in school and all staff will be acutely aware of how to keep to the guidelines; I ask that you all do your part as well because it appears that it is the actions of the adults which is most likely to impact on the virus transmission.

Hopefully this is just a quick reminder of much that I put out before the end of year in various newsletters.

Start day: Wednesday 2nd September for all Y1 – Y6 pupils.

Symptoms: As I wrote previously, if you believe your child or a family member to have symptoms of coronavirus, then please take a cautious approach which protects all others and the integrity of each class and year group bubble. Please see the separate quick-reference guide attached.

One-way system: Only the Clare Road and Maple Avenue gates will be open. We ask that you follow the one-way system while also maintaining social distance around the school. If this is followed, then hopefully the next step in a few weeks would be to open the Flitch Way gate, first as an exit only. We will be reviewing this and only when we feel it is safe and possible, will we make changes to open up more.

Drop off / collection: Gates will open at **8:40am**. Please be mindful of others on the paths and avoid gathering. In the morning, please drop your child at their classroom (Y5 & Y6 children – please send them on their way alone from the gates) and then continue on the same route to clear the site. There will be staff on the gates to welcome and guide you but also signage showing which way each year group should proceed. The blue gates will be closed at **9:10am**; any children arriving after this time will need to go via the office but this is something that I would strongly discourage – in line with our Attendance Policy, this will be a 'late' but would also mean more contact points for staff and children.

In the afternoon, to avoid parents gathering in larger numbers (which if you have followed the media is the likely increased risk of the infection being spread), we will not open the gates until **3:10pm**. Like the mornings, please do not block paths and try to collect children and then move on. Y5 & Y6 parents, kindly wait at the front of school.

Hand hygiene: As the children come in each day, they will be expected to wash their hands straight away. Each class will also have a disinfection spray or gel dispenser which the children will be expected to use as they come and go from breaks and lunchtimes, this will be overseen by the staff to ensure that all children understand this important part of the on-going fight against this and the need to be aware of their role in this.

Head teacher: Mr A. Cumpstey
Assistant Head: Mrs K. Farran

Uniform: Full school uniform is to be worn by all.

Equipment: Children only need to bring in the most basic things – reading book, lunch (if required) and a coat. A pencil case being brought in, like the hard plastic ones described, would be greatly appreciated in the first few days. Please do not bring in rucksacks, backpacks or other bags as we wish to keep as little coming backwards and forwards between home and school.

Contact: While we don't want to be impersonal and lose a key part of what makes us feel like one large extended family by being accessible, during these times where contact needs to be minimised, especially between adults, face-to-face meetings are to be discouraged. For the foreseeable future, we also cannot have parents in the school building so please drop off at the designated points; staff will settle the children in the classrooms. We cannot at present have meetings indoors and due to the one-way system, catching us at the beginning of the day will be difficult. Therefore, please be mindful of others and if you can deal with something via a phone call or e-mail, then please do so or arrange to meet with staff after school.

Please also note that now we are back, it would be inappropriate to continue to contact the LSAs who were calling you during lockdown to discuss school matters. They need to take up the professional line again and all information will be through the official channels as has previously been the case.

For class-related issues – teachers' e-mails (will be supplied separately)

For general school enquiries – admin@stmichaelscofe.essex.sch.uk

For attendance enquiries – tsmith@stmichaelscofe.com

PE days – kit only: On the days that your child has PE, which will be announced in the first few days, we would ask that the children come to school wearing the appropriate kit. All PE sessions will be outdoors so please provide long trousers and a sweatshirt. This would mean there is no need to change that day or bring anything else into school. This will likely be adapted for each year group in time as the weather changes.

Lunches: We have a three-stage plan in mind to cope with the extra restrictions that Covid19 will continue to place on us. In the first stage, lunches do not need to be pre-ordered as children will be able to choose from ham, cheese or tuna baguette each morning but will need to be paid via ParentMail. Once we move to the next stages, the pre-order system will be started again so that the kitchen can be better prepared. It would be wonderful for you to continue to support Chef Fykin in these early days and weeks by ordering a school lunch.

Stage 1: A grab bag containing: baguette, fruit, cake/flapjack, yoghurt and drink

Stage 2: Hot food which is simple to serve and easy for the child to manage themselves to reduce the need for help in cutting up – e.g. burgers, pasta bakes, pizzas, shepherds pie etc...

Stage 3: A full meal service from within the kitchen – e.g. Roast Wednesdays from the menus that Chef Fykin creates

Face coverings: At present, there is still guidance to say that primary children should not wear masks in school so as I said previously, if you and your child would like to wear one on site, there needs to be clear process for them to remove it before coming into school. Staff at present are not required to wear face coverings; should this change then I would advise the use of a visor as this allows clear communication with the children and our facial expressions to be seen by them – crucial to all.

All of the above, and more, will be kept under review and meetings with my staff in the first few weeks will centre around what is working and what needs to or could be altered. Any changes that affect you will be clearly announced and will be done in the best interests of the pupils, staff and parents.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Cumpstey

Head teacher: Mr A. Cumpstey
Assistant Head: Mrs K. Farran