

September 2020

Arrangements for all children to return to school.

On Thursday 2nd June, the DFE issued their [Guidance for full opening of schools](#) for schools to start planning from. The aim of this presentation is to ensure that parents are informed as to arrangements for September for their child and to understand how the school is managing and planning for any continued Coronavirus impact in our area. We hope that you find this useful and can refer back to it as required with your children throughout the Summer holidays.

Please note any text in red is taken from the DFE guidance.



St Nicholas^{CE}
First School

learning and believing, growing and achieving

Attendance at School

In March when the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak was increasing, we made clear no parent would be penalised or sanctioned for their child's non-attendance at school.

Now the circumstances have changed and it is vital for all children to return to school to minimise as far as possible the longer-term impact of the pandemic on children's education, wellbeing and wider development.

Missing out on more time in the classroom risks pupils falling further behind. Those with higher overall absence tend to achieve less well in both primary and secondary school. School attendance will therefore be mandatory again from the beginning of the autumn term. This means from that point, the usual rules on school attendance will apply, including:

- parents' duty to secure that their child attends regularly at school where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age;
- 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

Pupils who are shielding or self-isolating

We now know much more about coronavirus (COVID-19) and so in future there will be far fewer children and young people advised to shield whenever community transmission rates are high. Therefore, the majority of pupils will be able to return to school. You should note however that:

- a small number of pupils will still be unable to attend in line with public health advice because they are self-isolating and have had symptoms or a positive test result themselves; or because they are a close contact of someone who has coronavirus (COVID-19)
- shielding advice for all adults and children will pause on 1 August, subject to a continued decline in the rates of community transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). This means that even the small number of pupils who will remain on the shielded patient list can also return to school, as can those who have family members who are shielding. Read the [current advice on shielding](#)
- if rates of the disease rise in local areas, children (or family members) from that area, and that area only, will be advised to shield during the period where rates remain high and therefore they may be temporarily absent (see below).
- some pupils no longer required to shield but who generally remain under the care of a specialist health professional may need to discuss their care with their health professional before returning to school (usually at their next planned clinical appointment). You can find more advice from the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health at [COVID-19 - 'shielding' guidance for children and young people](#).

Where a pupil is unable to attend school because they are complying with clinical and/or public health advice, we expect schools to be able to immediately offer them access to remote education. Schools will monitor engagement with this activity.

Where children are not able to attend school as parents are following clinical and/or public health advice, absence will not be penalised.

Pupils and families who are anxious about return to school

All other pupils must attend school. Schools should bear in mind the potential concerns of pupils, parents and households who may be reluctant or anxious about returning and put the right support in place to address this.

If any families need support or have questions to raise please do let us know by emailing office@st-nicholas.staffs.sch.uk if it is a matter of a general nature or headteacher@st-nicholas.staffs.sch.uk if it is a more sensitive matter. We can advise by email or by telephone call.

Start of term

The Autumn Term 2020 commences for staff on Tuesday 1st September and **for children on Wednesday 2nd September.** Nursery and Reception parents have already received communication outlining how their children will have an incremental staged start to school for this first week.

Expectations for arrival and dismissal from school

The guidance makes clear that schools will **need to consider staggered starts or adjusting start and finish times to keep groups apart as they arrive and leave school.** At St Nicholas we have a large site and external entrances to classrooms, this aids arrival and dismissal, however we also have 2 year groups per entrance and a larger than average school population and so the following pages outline arrangements for individual year groups.

Scooters should not be brought on to the site please and only bicycles when they are essential as a mode of transport. The entrance points to school will be too congested to have children and scooters. We will revisit this decision in coming weeks and inform parents when this is ready to be relaxed.

Nursery

Arrangements for week commencing 7th September onwards:

Children will line up at the gate on Belvide Gardens and will come through to the classroom as supported to by staff on the door. Parents will not be permitted to enter the classroom, please prepare your child to be handed over to the member of staff on the door. If your child is upset, please move and stand aside, staff will support you and your child once all other children have entered. Parents then exit the school site keeping to the left. At the end of the day, parents queue in the same place and their child will be dismissed to them by staff.

Parents will need to exit as quickly as they are able, to allow the next parent and child in. We appreciate that this is difficult with young children who are new to school.

Children will be dismissed to parents who should wait at 1m intervals on the pavement in Belvide Gardens. Staff will bring children out to you at the gate. Please note that in the early days this may take a little bit longer as children are settling in to the school routines. Children will come in at different times based on their group to limit congestion around the Nursery gate.

Group	Arrival time	Collection time
Ladybirds	8.30am	11.30am
Dragonflies	8.40am	11.40am
Butterflies	8.50am	11.50am
Bumblebees	9.00am	12.00 noon

Reception

RP Arrival 8.35am Dismissal 3.15pm

RG Arrival 8.50am Dismissal 3.35pm

Arrangements for week commencing 7th September onwards:

Children will enter school via the Walton Gardens gate. Children can enter school through external class doors adjacent to the field by the yellow brick road and will be collected from here. At the start of the term, parents queue with their child up the yellow brick road against the wall to the right, leaving a 1 metre gap between you and the person in front. Parents are to ensure their child sanitizes their hands as they say their goodbyes and enter the building. Parents will not be permitted to enter the classroom, please prepare your child to be handed over to the member of staff on the door. If your child is upset, please move and stand with your child behind the staff, they will support you and your child once all children have entered. Parents then exit the school site via the Walton Gardens entrance keeping to the left. At the end of the day, parents queue in the same place and their child will be dismissed to them by staff.

Please don't worry if all of this sounds confusing! It really is! I will do some videos again for parents to know where to go.

Children will remain in their year group bubble, predominantly within their class base, but we acknowledge that our environment relies upon free flow to outdoors. We will timetable children to access this space within their groups as far as possible, again notwithstanding that they will all need to access outdoors as a group of 60 for lunchtime.

Year 1

1R and 1M Arrival 8.35am Dismissal 3.20pm

Parents enter the site through Walton Gardens.

Children will line up on spaced markings on the playground and parents wait in the parent area that will be demarcated. Parents should not leave until they have seen their child safely in the school building. Children queue at spaced intervals to come into school, in time they will know what number their space is. Mrs Robb will lead 1R round to class through entrance by Miss Parker's office and lost property, as 1M enter cloakroom, once all of 1M are in class, 1R take their belongings in. Parents exit via Walton Gardens keeping to the left as they exit.

Children will be dismissed from their numbered space on the line they stood on upon arrival.

Year 2

2P and 2S Arrival 8.45am Dismissal 3.30pm

Parents enter the site through Walton Gardens.

Children will line up on spaced markings on the playground and parents wait in the parent area that will be demarcated. Parents should not leave until they have seen their child safely in the care of school staff. Children queue at spaced intervals to come into school, in time they will know what number their space is. Children will be met by their class teacher/teaching assistant. Mrs Sollom will lead 2S round to class through entrance by Miss Parker's office and lost property, as 2P enter cloakroom, once all of 2P are in class, 2S take their belongings in.

Parents exit via Walton Gardens keeping to the left as they exit. Children will be dismissed from their numbered space on the line they stood on upon arrival. Parents to remain in the waiting area.

Year 3

3G Arrival 8.30am Dismissal 3.15pm

3W Arrival 8.40am Dismissal 3.25pm

Parents enter the site through Walton Gardens.

Children will line up on spaced markings on the playground and parents wait in the parent area that will be demarcated. Parents should not leave until they have seen their child safely in the care of school staff. Children queue at spaced intervals to come into school, in time they will know what number their space is.

Children will be met by their class teacher/teaching assistant. Parents exit via Walton Gardens keeping to the left as they exit. Children will be dismissed from their numbered space on the line they stood on upon arrival. Parents to remain in the waiting area.

Year 4

4SB Arrival 8.45am Dismissal 3.30pm

4A Arrival 8.25am Dismissal 3.10pm

Parents enter the site through Walton Gardens.

Children will line up on spaced markings on the playground and parents wait in the parent area that will be demarcated. Parents should not leave until they have seen their child safely in the care of school staff. Children queue at spaced intervals to come into school, in time they will know what number their space is.

Children will be met by their class teacher/teaching assistant. Parents exit via Walton Gardens keeping to the left as they exit. Children will be dismissed from their numbered space on the line they stood on upon arrival. Parents to remain in the waiting area.

Managing Arrivals and Dismissals Safely

When bringing children in or out of school we ask that parents:

- maintain a safe distance from one another
- respect one another and allow safe passing without coming too close
- refrain from approaching/congesting the area around classroom doors, leaving this for free access for children and staff
- stick to their designated entry and exit points.
- remain in the parent waiting areas that have been designated.
- manage their time well to facilitate prompt arrival and collection of children and minimise waiting

What if I have children in different year groups?

We appreciate that some families have children that span the year groups and a staggered arrival and dismissal brings its own challenges. Where this is the case and children can stick to their allocated times this is preferred. Where parents cannot accommodate this then we suggest that all children from a family come in at the latest child's time and exit at the earliest child's time. It will take a few weeks to get into a routine with this, but in time we will all come to know who is coming and going when. As I am sure you will appreciate it is a logistical impossibility to plan around every family situation.

Children arriving late or leaving slightly early must be brought to external classroom doors.

Likewise if parents have multiple children to drop off or collect, we would ask that they choose a safe and sensible route between drop off zones to support distancing. With the volume of people on site and the need for different entry points a one way system is problematic. We have outlined how things need to work here, but acknowledge that some situations will need common sense to prevail. We do need to all work together to make this process as slick and straight forward as we can.

What if my child's class finishes before 3.30pm or after 3.30pm and needs after school club?

Do not worry we have this in hand. Miss Sullivan will be ready to take the children from 3pm as required in their groups. Teachers will deliver those who finish after 3.30pm to after school club as they would normally do.

Likewise children will be taken to classes at the appropriate time from Breakfast Club.

Managing Safety

Using the DFE and PHE guidance, we have been working on a plan which we believe will support the safety of our children as we return from lockdown. The principles that underpin this plan are set out as:

- a requirement that people who are ill stay at home
- robust hand and respiratory hygiene
- enhanced cleaning arrangements
- active engagement with NHS Test and Trace
- formal consideration of how to reduce contacts and maximise distancing between those in school wherever possible and minimise potential for contamination so far as is reasonably practicable

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

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

Managing Safety

As a two form entry school we will organise children in class based groupings as far as we are able to. In some classes these are groups of 30 and in others up to 32. However as classes in a year group share a toilet block and may need to join for lunch and playtimes they will also exist in a wider year group bubble of up to 64 pupils. Where children are mixing with the other class we will ensure:

- maximum distancing possible,
- use of outdoors
- reducing group sizes where this is possible

in accordance with the DFE hierarchy of controls.

Lunchtimes

We will operate with staggered lunchtimes to ensure space in the school hall and playground and allow for cleaning.

EYFS and KS1 will have lunch from 11.30-12.30pm and KS2 from 12.30-1.30pm. Children will be supervised to wash their hands and may be asked to use hand gel also. We will always ensure that this is cleaned thoroughly before and after each sitting. Children will sit in allocated rows for their class group, so as to not mix with other groups.

Children will go outside to play in almost all weathers, **so please ensure they always have weather appropriate coats, hats etc.** We have no way of supervising children who need to be kept indoors as a precautionary measure e.g as they are feeling run down, if this is the case they may be sent home from school ill. We need to give children this outdoor time for a number of reasons:

- to give them much needed exercise and socially distanced social time (children will have their own class, playground areas marked out)
- to allow for the classroom to be well ventilated and cleaned between sessions

Typically when it is wet playtime two classes come together in close quarters with dinner staff. We will not have the staff available to keep children in groups of 30 and still allow teachers and staff to have their lunch, clean the classroom and prepare for the afternoon.

School Dinners and Snack

Sandwich Children:

Children can bring food in a named lunchbox, but where possible this should be wipeable and containing items that your child can manage for themselves. If parents can sustain this, it is optimum still for children to bring lunch in a disposable bag to minimise transference of infection between different environments. Lunchboxes should be sensibly packed (please see [healthy lunchbox guide](#) online), please do not overload your child with too many items. Children will need to eat their lunch within a 30 minute window and need to vacate the dinner hall to allow for cleaning and fresh air.

Hot dinners:

As you know this will be at no charge for Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children and for those in receipt of free school meals. We will send out a menu in due course. I have been informed that there will be one hot choice daily and a scaled down menu. Children will not have access to salad cart, however this will be served by kitchen staff who will be wearing PPE.

Children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are entitled to a free school meal, as well as those families in receipt of certain benefits. We would urge all that are eligible to take up the free school meal as it is:

- nutritionally balanced
- low in sugar and salt content
- supportive of the school's budget (we pay for the service and so need ideally to ensure sufficient uptake to balance this – as you can appreciate the school has been financially by loss of income in lots of ways since March)
- a way of developing knife and fork skills and independence
- a way of exposing your child to different food types
- FREE! 😊

All children can bring two sensible pieces of healthy snack to school with them daily to be consumed in the morning and afternoon break for the Autumn Term only to help them adjust to the new timetable and being back in school. This might be fruit, a cereal bar, carrot sticks etc and should not be chocolate bars or crisps. With KS2 having the later lunch, parents may wish for this to be more substantial than normal in the first weeks as their bodies adjust to being back at school.

Please complete the online form [here](#) to inform us as to whether your child is having a hot dinner in September.

Breakfast Club

This will take place in the hall as usual and we will aim to ventilate this space well. This will be easier within the Summer weather conditions, but may need to be reviewed in the cold, Winter mornings.

Parents will drop off as normal to the rear hall door, keeping to the left as they come and go. Parents will not be allowed into the school hall. Staff will seat children in year group tables and where possible in class tables which will be arranged in rows. Children will sit with a space next to them and nobody directly opposite them.

We will have limited equipment out due to the handling and cleaning implications. Moreover we will need to rely on breakfast children's TV and other activities that are deemed safe. As soon as it is safe to do so we can resume with normal colouring, Lego, singing and dancing and games that the children enjoy. Where it is safe to do so, Mr Mills may take a year group bubble out for some fresh air and a run around also.

Children having breakfast will be called up to the hatch at spaced intervals.

Children will be delivered to class safely at their class staggered arrival time, this will reduce the number of children in the hall towards the end of the club which is when it is busiest.

All children will be hand gelled on entry using the school's hand gel.

After School Club

We anticipate that this will be able to go ahead. We intend to organise children in year group bubbles (rows).

The plan will need to balance what the school is able to provide within staffing and space limitations (school will be needing extra cleaning after school and so children cannot disperse too widely around the site), with maximising consistency of groupings or reducing size of groupings.

Staff will seat children in year group tables and where possible in class tables which will be arranged in rows. Children will sit with a space next to them and nobody directly opposite them. Once we have confirmed numbers attending we will contact parents with the arrangements for their child specifically. These will come out by email.

After school club will more than likely take place in the school hall up until 5pm and then move up to Nursery to allow the hall to be cleaned.

Children may bring their own snack as normal.

Learning Environments

The classrooms will be organised to ensure that they can be easily cleaned at routine intervals during the day and after school. The children will wash their hands with soap and water at regular intervals. The resources the children have access to will be reduced and cleaned daily. Classrooms will be free from soft furnishings and any items that could contribute to an increased spread of infection.

All classes from Y2-4 will be arranged in rows facing forwards. There is no Victorian Gradgrindesque agenda within doing so, it is literally a practicality to ensure that children are not breathing and coughing at one another, face to face across the table. This will impact on the dynamic in the classroom for a while but the children will get used to it. They will sit by the same partner and not move tables as their table will have all their belongings etc on it which will not be touched by anyone else.

In EYFS (Nursery and Reception) this will obviously not be possible. However staff will work within the principle of distancing and only having small consistent groups sat at an activity at one time.

In Y1 we will have more flexibility around table organisation, but will avoid children being sat facing one another. By October half term we will aim to have children forward facing in rows should there still be a need to do so, but initially we believe children need an approach that better mirrors EYFS for the first few weeks in school.

Curriculum

We intend to offer our full, broad and balanced curriculum as per government recommendations. This will be cognisant of the need to go back over missed or insecure learning, addressing any gaps, as well as the need to support children's emotional, social and physical wellbeing. We will be building into the first two terms increased movement opportunities for children to support them to become more active (if they have not been – we appreciate many have become accomplished walkers!) but also to help get fit for learning and school life again.

We need to support the children through their return to school, they need high expectations matched with high levels of care and nurture. We will need to amend our school timetable as we have to build in frequent cleaning opportunities, as well as manage lunches and playtimes in different ways.

We will not undertake any educational visits in the Autumn Term.

Worship will take place in class delivered by class staff or centrally for the whole school using MS Teams. E.g All can logo on for a virtual Superstars of the week with Miss Parker.

Extra Curricular opportunities

Peripatetic Music teachers, supply teachers and SEND support staff who visit a number of schools can continue to work in school. However they will be expected to adhere to school distancing and safety measures. It is parental choice if they wish for their child to attend.

Initially there will be no clubs offered by Mr Mills, but we would hope to offer these again by Week 3 to year groups to minimise mixing. These groups will not exceed 30 pupils.

Stationery for Years 1-4 only

Children will all be given a core pack of individual stationery items that will remain on their individual table at all times. In addition to this we would ask that every child returns in September with a named simple pencil case (nothing to fiddle with on it please) containing:

colouring crayons
pencil sharpener
rubber
glue stick

This will be used by your child only and will remain their responsibility. We obviously have these items in school already, but would find it difficult to maintain every child having an individual set of these that have been untouched by anyone else. I think our children will be very excited at the prospect of having their own pencil case in school (something that is normally discouraged) and that might be a nice thing to go and buy or organise closer to the end of the 6 weeks holidays to encourage your child to come back in if you feel that they might be reluctant.

What does my child need to bring to school?

As little as possible!

All children will need:

- Named PE kit which will remain in school
- A pair of suitable named outdoor trainers (as we will be doing PE in all weathers outdoors)
- Snack if you wish for them to have one
- Named pencil case (see previous page)
- Lunch in a disposable or wipeable container if you wish for them to have sandwiches
- A suitable outdoor named coat and sun hat/gloves etc should weather require them
- A very small bag (if they need a bag at all?)
- Named wellington boots from October half term if there is still a need to distance as we will use the field in inclement weather

Items in red are not required by Nursery or Reception pupils

Illness and Medication

To safeguard all, we will have a zero-tolerance approach to children who cannot adhere to Catch it, Kill it, Bin it as this is a risk to others. Where we believe a child is coughing or sneezing frequently, parents will be asked to arrange collection. As such if your child has hayfever, please do give them antihistamine as we may be concerned about symptoms which may overlap with Covid-19 symptoms. Likewise please communicate these to us.

Where children require medicine (reminder we only administer antibiotics that need to be taken 4x daily), this will be administered by year group staff at designated times. First Aid will be managed by staff within year groups. Head bumps will be checked by a Key Stage First Aider in the afternoon and the usual text sent to parents.

School Uniform

Children must all return to school in uniform. Reception children do not need PE kit at the moment please, so don't buy it yet as they often get little wear out of it to start with. Children can wear Summer uniform still up until October half term if parents wish for them to. **If parents wish for them to, children can wear polo t-shirts instead of full traditional school shirts all year around.** We recognise this may support parents with washing and cost for the return to school.

Local Lockdowns

Let's hope that this isn't something that will affect us. However we are trying to ensure that we have a plan and structure in place to provide a more dynamic two-way learning experience for children should this be something that affects us. We are currently working with the other two MAT schools on this.

We envisage in the event of this vulnerable pupils will still have access to school and children of key workers. We will advise of this as and when we would be directed to implement measures.

Communication

In person conversations with teaching staff or office staff will not be possible and all communication with the school should be via email until further notice. If you have any questions or concerns please send emails to your child's teacher, Miss Parker or the school office.

Parents should not enter the building but email or phone the school with any messages.

Please ensure that only one adult collects and drops off at school and no additional family members where this is possible.

Miss Parker will be out almost every morning to receive any issues that cannot be emailed or telephoned in as required, but please still be mindful of distancing.

School events

For now we are not planning any whole school events that might normally take place in the Autumn Term. As and when we are directed that large gatherings can resume we will evaluate different situations for risk vs benefit both in terms of safety, but also educationally given that children have been away from school for such a long time.

Parental Responsibility

Children and young people who live in a household with someone who is extremely clinically vulnerable and shielding should not attend. Mrs Currall will be asking parents to inform her of any children in this situation in the coming days.

If your child or somebody else in your home has or has recently had symptoms of coronavirus they should not be in school. If that happens, it is likely in these situations that your household members, including children, will not be leaving the house for up to 14 days.

Please see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection> for more details. If your child shows any symptoms during the school day, they will be isolated immediately (where possible outdoors) with a member of staff who will wear PPE (face mask and gloves) and parents will need to collect them as a matter of urgency.

What if my child displays symptoms?
What will happen in school?

- If your child displays any of the symptoms of Covid-19, they will be moved to a ventilated isolation zone (or outdoors in all possible instances, weather permitting)
- Parents will be called and will need to collect their child and any other siblings immediately from outside the School Office
- **If your child is ill before they come to school, do not send them. If in doubt, keep them at home, inform us and monitor.**

What if my child displays symptoms? What will happen afterwards?

- Once collected, the isolation area, isolation toilet (if used) and the child's bubble room will be thoroughly cleaned in line with guidance
- Your child should start a 7-day period of isolation with all household members who should isolate for 14 days
- A test should be arranged straight away
- If the test comes back positive, all staff and children within the child's bubble must isolate for 14 days (we will notify parents of this)
- If the test is negative, isolation can end for the child and family members and they can return to school and work (unless they have since developed symptoms themselves – they must then wait for results of their own test)
- School will follow DFE, PHE and Staffordshire advice around notification of any cases to the school community as is relevant at the time.

Do you have any questions?

If so, you can:

- Email the Office: office@st-nicholas.staffs.sch.uk
- Email Miss Parker: headteacher@st-nicholas.staffs.sch.uk

We are looking forward to welcoming ALL of our children back to St Nicholas!

We are implementing the strictest of measures as we care about protecting our children, their families and staff. If it feels that we are being overzealous or overly cautious, this is because we have taken this seriously. We want to follow all guidance we are issued with in line with the school's risk assessment.

We are very aware that our risk assessment and policies will need to continue to evolve and adapt to respond to changing situation and of course issues that arise when procedures are tested.

See you soon!