

Dear all,

We are still waiting for explicit guidance from the Department for Education as to what safety measures we are expected to put in place but it seems very likely that the expectations will be more similar to those in place at the start of lockdown 1 rather than when measures were relaxed in June. The fact that the slogan has reverted to Stay Home, Protect the NHS, Save Lives reflects the gravity of the situation. One of the measures we will reintroduce is 2m social distancing between children in classrooms. This will of course reduce the number of children who can be in school but will mean that they, their families, and school staff will be safer than they have been.

Most families that we have identified as critical workers did not send their child to school today because they were able to make alternative provision. Thank you, that is the correct basis upon which to make your decision to take up a key worker place in school. The more time children are at home, the safer all of us are and the better chance we have of reducing transmission and saving lives. If you are a key worker could you carefully consider which days, or part of days, you will absolutely need your child to be in school. If you could complete the attached table and email it to hawkenk@st-josephs.plymouth.sch.uk we will be able to plan spaces accordingly. Children who attend school will need to wear school uniform in future.

Unfortunately we will not be able to run the Breakfast club after this week. If you are a key worker for whom this will cause great difficulties please let me know.

Thank you to the families who expressed their need for help with accessing remote learning. Although that small window of opportunity proved unsuccessful we should be able to loan a chrome book to each of the families who contacted me earlier today. We are still exploring other ways of securing more devices so please do inform me if you need support to fully access the remote learning. The DfE have let us know that the minimum time primary school should be engaged in school driven remote learning is three hours each school day. We are grateful to have been allocated fourteen of the hundreds of thousands of devices that were referred to in the announcement yesterday evening but the final ordering process is not open to primary schools yet. We will do all we can to ensure that all children can engage in remote learning. We have managed to secure a stock of prepaid SIM cards donated by Vodafone and are investigating how they can be best used.

As most children were in school on Monday they were all at risk of contracting the virus. Any child who was in school on Monday who develops symptoms before 3,30pm on Wednesday will need to be tested. If that test comes back as positive before 3.30pm on Sunday you will need to inform the school so that we can identify close contacts who will need to self-isolate. This applies to all children whether they are attending school since Monday or not.

It has been a busy 23 hours since the announcement. I will continue to provide you with updates when we have new information. All updates will also be posted on the school website as I know this bulk emailing system is not getting through to every email address. One parent did find the newsletter emails in her spam / junk folder. Her computer obviously did not think much of our newsletters !