



"We are called to be the hands and face of Jesus as we learn, love and grow together"

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12th June 2020

Dear parents and carers

Another week passes by as everyone in school works the 'new normal' into a daily routine. We are currently averaging about 90 children per day and 150 children over two weeks. Our children are divided into 16 bubbles: 8 key worker bubbles attend each week and 8 further class-based bubbles (with pupils from rec, Y1 and Y6) attend on a rota over two weeks. Each bubble is staffed by two members of the team, at least one of whom remains with the bubble throughout the whole day (including breaks and lunch times). Each bubble works independently of all other bubbles throughout the day, even at break and lunchtimes. This ensures that the numbers of contacts for each member of the bubble is reduced to a minimum.



In order to make this work, many staff are working outside of their usual year groups during the school day whilst still being responsible for the learning of pupils remaining at home. Getting it right for those at home remains a priority for us currently. The home learning will be tweaked over the coming weeks to try and create an element of parity between learning in school and at home. These have been extraordinary times and a Herculean effort from the entire staff team has been required to keep 'all the plates spinning' – I thank them sincerely for their brilliant work.

We all waited with bated breath to hear the Government's announcement in relation to a potential wider opening of schools recently. For weeks, schools had been voicing concerns that their staffing was



already at capacity and as such any wider opening, as much as we'd love to have everyone back, was going to be impossible whilst following the current guidance. Although we have three spare classrooms available, we currently have no staff left to distribute to these should we need to open any further bubbles. Therefore, despite a certain sadness, I breathed a sigh of relief when it was made clear that increasing pupil numbers further had to be a school decision and that it would not be possible for many. I know that this makes things difficult for many families and it is upsetting for all of us that the school year will end without the usual marking points and rites of passage. We are, however, looking towards ways to aid transition and to help create closure for pupils before the Summer.

I know that so many of you will be worried in relation to what your children are missing out on by being out of school for so long. This will not have been helped by the rhetoric of 'big catch up plans' in recent days. It is important to point out that 'catch up' is not currently our priority – in school we are focusing on emotional wellbeing and establishing new routines. Teachers are expert at dealing with unplanned absences of children and we are currently designing a curriculum for September that will plan the right next steps for each individual wherever they are upon return. This is something that we are skilled at – please do not worry - I know, however, that it is easier said than done!

We have fielded several calls this week from parents who have changed their mind about a return to school and we appreciate that this has been an incredibly difficult decision for all. Although we do not have the staff to open any new bubbles, we do have very limited spaces in *some* of our bubbles. As such, if you are a key worker or if your child is in one of the eligible groups, please contact the school office and we will see what we can do. If a place isn't available, your name will be placed on a waiting list in case anyone drops out of the bubble.

We wait to hear what the arrangements will be for September and as soon as we know more, we will communicate our plans to you. In the meantime, we are contingency planning for a number of potential scenarios.

Some reminders for all parents during this period:

- If you are concerned about any matter in relation to your child's learning or wellbeing, please email your child's class teacher. Email addresses are appended to this letter.
- Remember to use the class pages of the school website for links to useful websites if you need extra learning tasks.
- Send any 'ischoolation' images to Mrs Sherry for inclusion in the weekly Pupil Post.
- Please ensure that children do not bring any extra items into school
- Please avoid talking to staff at the school door upon pick up and drop off; for their protection communication is generally via email or telephone
- Please try to stick to the staggered drop off / collection times – this reduces the potential for increased numbers on the site
- Only one adult may accompany a child to class each morning (Yr 6 can come in on their own ... as do several Yr 5 Key Worker Children)
- Entrance is strictly via the front gate and exit via the back gate
- Please adhere to social distancing measures between families at collection and drop off on site
- Please ensure that home packed lunches do not have any nut-based items (including Nutella spread) as we have children and staff with severe nut allergies in school
- The school building is well ventilated with open windows – this can at times create a chill (even during the summer months) – jumpers may be necessary!
- On warmer days please ensure your child/ren have suncream applied before school and if hayfever sufferers, then please medicate accordingly
- Please ensure that fresh clothes are worn each day (as this limits a potential home – school contamination) – we are aware that this may mean that full school uniform is not possible at all times – do not worry!



- Please do not ask for reading books – nothing is being brought between school and home (except water bottles, lunch boxes and snack boxes) currently as per our risk assessment.
- Please ensure that your child's water bottle is cleaned each day (including its outside surfaces) and is labelled clearly.
- Please check for emails daily – there may be occasions where a bubble has to close at short notice for a period of time and this would be notified via ParentMail.
- Please be rigorous in your checking for covid-like symptoms and adhere to advice to self-isolate for 14 days as a family should anyone in the household develop symptoms (high temperature, persistent cough, or a loss or change to your sense of taste or smell)
- If your child is unwell (even if not covid related) please keep them off school, and if staff become ill, timings of bubbles will have to be reduced or cancelled as there is no flexibility in staffing currently.

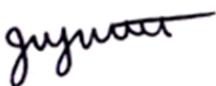
After a long list of reminders, please could I take this opportunity to thank you for your cooperation, patience, best wishes and prayers, whether your child has been at home or in school. It is at times such as these that we all realise the absolute value and blessing of our community. Thank you! I know that many children have commented that it is the everyday normal things that they are missing. With this in mind, from now on my Friday Vlog will take the form of a weekly assembly. This week's is available here: <https://youtu.be/NxTdr20pg2Y>

I wanted to share this powerful prayer for community produced by Ten:Ten (whose resources we have been sharing during the pandemic); perhaps we could all join in it together:

We are not people of fear:
 We are people of courage.
 We are not people who protect our own safety:
 We are people who protect our neighbours' safety.
 We are not people of greed:
 We are people of generosity.
 We are your people God,
 Giving and loving,
 Wherever we are,
 Whatever it costs
 For as long as it takes
 Wherever you call us.
 Amen

May each of our families continue to be held in God's loving arms.

Yours sincerely



Jon White
Headteacher



Email addresses for school staff:

Nursery:	Mrs Humphries	shumphries@stvincent.herts.sch.uk
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	Mrs Heath	cheath@stvincent.herts.sch.uk
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	Mrs McGuire	lmcquire@stvincent.herts.sch.uk
Year 3	Mrs Blythe	cblythe@stvincent.herts.sch.uk
	Miss Culkin	sculkin@stvincent.herts.sch.uk
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