

The Federation of Our Lady Queen of Martyrs, Esh Winning & St Joseph's, Ushaw Moor RC Primary Schools



*Living, loving and learning together,
with our eyes focused on Jesus.*



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Dear Parents, Carers and Children of St Joseph's

September Opening

The government have issued guidance to help us all to return to school safely in September. As a school we are very much looking forward to having all our children back on site and learning within their classes. We have missed each of them a great deal. The issued guidance has sections of advice within it that are easy and straightforward to implement. However, other advice is much more difficult within our setting. We have old and unusual buildings with small spaces and plumbing constraints that we normally work around well. As every school is different – in terms of staffing, configuration, resources and so on - I know that each school around the country is doing its utmost to ensure the safety of their pupils and staff within their individual setting, and doing it differently. This is what unites us all. The measures detailed below are the first of what I'm sure will be many. I know that as we put them into practice we will need to alter and tweak them as we cannot foresee every eventuality – and we know that our children always surprise us!

Return to School Dates

To aid with transition each year group will have the opportunity to spend the day with their class teacher prior to the rest of their class returning.

Date	Year Groups in School
Wed 2 Sept	Years 1, 3, 5
Thur 3 Sept	Years 2, 4, 6
Fri 4 Sept onwards	Years 1 – 6
Tue 8 Sept to Mon 14 Sept	Reception gradual transition
Wed 16 Sept onwards	Reception join full time

Parents of reception children new in September will receive an additional letter detailing times for transition.

Wrap-around Care

Unfortunately, we are **unable to offer any after school clubs for the first half of the autumn term** in order for us to learn how to manage our new ways of working. We **hope to be able to offer breakfast club earlier if this is possible** and there is demand for this but we will need to plan this carefully and know exactly who will be attending. Please **e-mail the office by Friday 11 September** if you feel your child will require breakfast club. We are conscious that this will prove difficult for working parents; we apologise for this and hope you understand the complications wrap-around

care poses at present. We intend to review this provision as time goes on and offer it as soon as it becomes safe and practical to do so.

Hygiene & Cleanliness

There will be a continued emphasis on regular handwashing and children will be required to wash their hands frequently. Children will be taught how to do this and will receive regular direction and time to do so.

Hand sanitizer will also be in place around the school for directed use in specific areas – for example before entering the lunch hall.

Increased cleaning will take place around the school in toilets and of frequently touched areas/surfaces.

Illness

DO NOT send your child to school if they have any of the coronavirus symptoms. If your child becomes unwell with a *new, continuous cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell*, you **must keep them at home**, arrange a test as soon as possible and they must self-isolate for at least 7 days. If a child becomes unwell with these symptoms in school, they will be isolated and sent home immediately. Whilst our staff and children are not required to wear PPE around school, staff will be wearing full PPE for the most serious medical treatments or if a child requires isolation.

Should an individual be confirmed as having COVID-19 school will take advice from the health protection team for definitive advice on who must be sent home for a self-isolation period of 14 days. In some cases this may be the whole class, including staff.

Social Distancing in School in September

Inside school, children will be kept in one of 4 bubbles, where possible. This will consist of their class.

During lunch times Class 1 & 2 bubbles may occupy the lunch hall together but when outside will have their own separate play zone.

Class 3 & 4 will similarly share break times but have a specific play zone.

There will be no whole school gatherings for liturgies, assemblies or singing etc.

Where practical to do so, the corridors have arrow reminders to encourage children to walk on the left at all times.

Children will sit facing the front of the classroom, shoulder to shoulder for most lessons/activities but group work will also take place.

Physical contact will be discouraged between children.

Staff will endeavour to remain 2m from children as well as adults. Please don't worry – we WILL comfort your child if they are upset or have hurt themselves. When in class we will still be monitoring work and helping children to flourish. We already operate a minimal marking system which will assist with this. Please measure this distance out with your child and help by reminding them to stay this far away from adults and each other.

Overcrowding

In order to keep everyone safe and to ease pressure on shared areas in school (corridors, toilets, cloakrooms), as well as limiting large numbers of adults gathering (in car park, at gates), we will be operating a staggered start and end to the day. We will use two gates to access the school. Siblings have been grouped together in order to ease the need for adults to wait. **You will receive a text giving you your group.** Please arrive within the time slot given, queue at 2m intervals if necessary and leave the site promptly once your child has been passed to staff. Where safe to do so, older children are encouraged to make their own way to and from school. *Children should not enter through the main entrance and children will not be escorted into school by staff. If you are late, please wait well away from the school until other groups have entered. No parent cars are permitted in the school car park at any time.*

Group	Entrance	Morning Drop-off	Afternoon Pick-up
A	Main Gate	8:40 - 8:45	3:25 - 3:35
B	Church Gate	8:45 - 8:55	3:25 - 3:35
C	Main Gate	8:45 - 8:50	3:35 - 3:45
D	Main Gate	8:50 - 8:55	3:35 - 3:45

Curriculum

During the Autumn Term we will be focusing heavily on children's wellbeing and emotions. Alongside this we will be encouraging and developing reading and missed mathematic skills as the foundation of future learning. We will not be neglecting other subjects and children will enjoy a full curriculum. There will be lots 'brain breaks' throughout the day to re-build children's confidence and stamina after being away from the classroom for so long.

Your help is appreciated in all areas of your child's learning and your home-schooling has been amazing. Please keep this going! Reading with them for 10 minutes each night and encouraging them to complete the school learning apps each evening will greatly assist your child.

Uniform & PE kit

Pupils are required to wear school uniform as usual. This includes appropriate footwear. All uniform should be clean when arriving at school each day. If you have experienced problems obtaining uniform please send your child in non-branded clothing – we would much rather they came to school in non-uniform than did not attend.

To avoid changing clothes in school and eliminate the risk of pupils picking up other children's clothes etc, pupils will be **expected to come to school in their PE kits and return home in them on the days they have PE.** Please ensure your child wears a **school PE top, school jumper/cardigan, coat, plain navy or grey tracksuit bottoms and a pair of trainers** on these days (no visible logos). Please note, no classes will be going swimming yet and we are also hoping to hold PE outdoors as much as possible in line with guidance. You will be notified of your child's PE days in September.

Please ensure all clothing is labelled with your child's name.

Lunches & Snacks

Class 1 and 2 will eat lunch in the dining hall after having playtime outside. Children in Class 3 and 4 will eat lunches in their classrooms. Those on school lunches in Class 3 and 4 will have their school lunch delivered take-away style to the classroom.

All packed lunches should be as healthy as possible and include fruit or vegetables each day. No chocolate bars or sweets or fizzy drinks are permitted in the lunch bags.

If you have not completed the online lunch menus or you will need to provide your child with a packed lunch. Please contact the school office if you require assistance.

Cool Milk supplies should return by the end of September and we shall keep you informed as this progresses.

There is uncertainty around the continuation of the National Fruit Scheme which provided each child in KS1 a piece of fruit at break time. **Please send your child with a piece of fruit for morning break time as they will be hungry.**

Equipment – Items to bring

It is really important that we minimise items coming in and out of school. Each child will be provided with a new water bottle on their first day which will come home each night to be refilled and returned to their desk. We will be unable to provide water for those who do not have a bottle. All they need to bring each day is their water bottle, a coat and a packed lunch if they need one. *Children must bring their completed Transition Booklet from their school report on their first day back to school.* Each child may also bring their own resources in a pencil case. They will need: HB pencil, blue pen (for juniors), glue stick, rubber, 15cm ruler, coloured pencils, pencil sharpener, children's round tipped scissors. Items will be available on request for those experiencing difficulties obtaining them. The pencil case will remain in school all week.

All items within the pencil case, as well as the pencil case itself, should be cleaned each weekend before returning to school on Monday.

Please ensure all personal belongings (yes, each pencil and case) is labelled with your child's name.

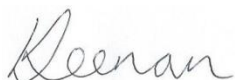
Communication

If you wish to communicate with a member of staff in school, **please e-mail or ring school**. Entrance into school will be by appointment or invitation only and only when absolutely necessary.

I am conscious there is a great deal of information contained in this letter and you may have questions or queries. Please do feel free to call or e-mail us if you require any further clarification. A copy of this letter will be posted on the school website. Please be assured that, as always, every single decision that staff and governors make has your children's safety and wellbeing at the heart of it. When pupils return in September, we will be ensuring that making them feel safe, secure and happy in our new routines is our first priority and will be reviewing and amending practices as necessary and in line with any further guidance.

Thank you once again for your continued support, patience and understanding in these difficult times.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Keenan".

Louise Keenan (Mrs)
Head teacher