



# St. Michael's Church of England Primary School



Carlisle Road, Dalston, Carlisle, Cumbria CA5 7LN · Tel: 01228 711544 · Headteacher: Mrs J Paisley

Our school values: *Respect · Kindness · Challenge · Forgiveness · Perseverance*

Dear Parents

18 May 2020

As promised I wanted to bring you a little more information about what is currently happening in school about a possible reopening from 1 June. I definitely do not have all of the answers as yet but I wanted to share with you the preparations that are going on.

Last week I wrote to parents of children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 to try and gain an insight into their feelings about school reopening. These, as you will know, are the first year groups, along with children of critical workers who need emergency childcare, that the Government have identified to return.

Safety of both pupils and staff is of course our number one priority. The procedures for getting school ready to reopen and then to actually open the doors is a very complicated one and we are still awaiting firm guidance from both the Department for Education and the Local Authority on how to do this. However, I think it is only fair to share with you some likely measures which we will need to put in place in order to keep our children and staff as safe as possible.

Most children will not be in their normal classrooms, class groups or with their normal teaching staff. We will be required to keep children in smaller groups throughout their time at school and they will not be allowed to mix with other groups. Start and finish times, lunch times and break times will all need to be staggered to avoid children mixing with others not in their groups. Parents will be required to drop off and pick up from the front gates and will not be allowed on the school premises. Our cleaning and Health and Safety procedures are all being modified to ensure we keep everyone safe. In summary, St. Michael's will be very different when we return. The type of education that children were used to and normal lessons may not be able to be delivered for health and safety reasons.

Staff availability is a significant factor in the staged approach of our children returning to school and this is being factored into our plans, through consultation with staff and consideration of their circumstances, for what could potentially be in excess of 130 children. It may be that we need to consider more creative methods, (for example children attending on a rota basis, am/pm sessions or on a daily, weekly cycle), in addition to having a staggered start/end to the day for these year groups.

We need clear guidance from both the Government and the Local Authority in order to plan how it is possible to socially distance within school and keep our children, staff and families safe. Please be assured that we will follow all safety guidance fully and will not reopen until we are confident that it is as safe as it can be with the measures in place

Our plan will be that whenever and however we reopen we will constantly review the situation, increasing numbers only when and if it is safe to do so.

Our Breakfast Club and After School Club have asked me to let you know that, unfortunately, this service will not be available until September at the earliest. Following risk assessments they have made the difficult decision that in the interests of safety they will remain closed. School have been told children must stay in small groups and not mix with others. If the children were then going on to after school club they would be mixing with children from outside their group. Social distancing and cleaning would also be extremely difficult and problematic for the facility.

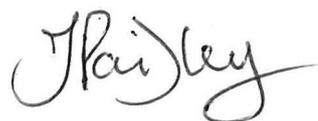
I will be writing separately to parents who have previously identified themselves as key workers. If you feel you are in this group and do not receive a separate letter from me by the end of today please get in touch as soon as possible.

As always, I will do my best to keep you fully informed but for now, please try not to worry. We will continue to provide Home Learning for all of our pupils in the same way that we have been, keep in contact with you and continue to try and support you and your children however we are able, in these very difficult and increasingly uncertain times.

Again, if you have any queries or there is anything we can help you with, please do not hesitate to get in touch. The easiest way to do this currently is via email, [jpaisley@st-michaels.cumbria.sch.uk](mailto:jpaisley@st-michaels.cumbria.sch.uk).

Take care and stay safe.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "JPaisley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'P' and 'y'.

Mrs J Paisley  
Headteacher