



## St. Mary's Church of England VC Infant School

St Mary's Way, Baldock, Herts, SG7 6HY

Telephone: 01462 892347

E-mail: [admin@stmarysinfants.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@stmarysinfants.herts.sch.uk)

[www.stmarysinfants.herts.sch.uk](http://www.stmarysinfants.herts.sch.uk)

Headteacher: Miss Verity Edey

Deputy Head: Mrs Kathryn Thorp

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

I do hope that you have all had a safe and relaxing holiday, enjoyed the bursts of sunshine that have appeared to us and that you found quality time to spend together.

I would like to warmly welcome all our new and returning families back to St Mary's. Our staff have been very busy over the summer holidays, transforming classrooms and environments and refining a very exciting curriculum for our children to enjoy and flourish in the academic year ahead.

### Special Thanks

On behalf of all the staff, I would like to thank you all for your kind and thoughtful gifts at the end of last term. These were all gratefully received by staff and it was wonderful to hear from so many parents the difference that staff made to their child's education and wellbeing last year.

A special shout out and a massive thank you to Mr Body, our Caretaker who has transformed three classrooms this summer holiday. I know that the teachers and children will appreciate this new, refreshed environment to undertake their learning in.

### Congratulations and Exciting News

Congratulations to Mrs Ewer and Mrs Corcoran who return to us as married teachers this term. We look forward to hearing all about their big day.

I am delighted to inform you that Miss Basra is expecting her first baby. This is very exciting news and we look forward to sharing in this joy with her in the term ahead. We are in the process of recruiting a teacher to cover Miss Basra's maternity leave and I will inform parents and carers of Mars class pupils as soon as we have appointed a suitable candidate and I have information to share.

I had the great pleasure of being invited by the Ambassador of the Czech Republic to a garden party at the Czech Embassy in London. I was able to see the collection of Franta Belsky's artwork and make networks for the school. We will look forward to hosting the new Ambassador this academic year and embrace our art curriculum, linking with a Czech school in London. I had the honour of being present when the Prime Minister's father, Stanley Johnson received his award for being a fabulous eco-warrior between both countries, just like our eco-warriors in school. Watch this space for exciting things to come! To read about the event, click the link below.

[https://www.mzv.cz/london/en/what\\_s\\_new/summer\\_garden\\_party\\_at\\_the\\_embassy\\_of.html](https://www.mzv.cz/london/en/what_s_new/summer_garden_party_at_the_embassy_of.html)

### Covid19

During the summer, there have been significant changes to guidance for both schools and parents:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early->

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[yearsproviders-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/step-4-update-what-parentsand-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges](https://www.stmarysinfants.herts.sch.uk/home/customer/www/stmarysinfants.herts.sch.uk/public_html/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/20210716-Update-to-Contact-Tracing.pdf)

Please refer to the letter that was sent out to all parents before the holidays regarding contact tracing and isolation in Step 4.

[https://www.stmarysinfants.herts.sch.uk/home/customer/www/stmarysinfants.herts.sch.uk/public\\_html/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/20210716-Update-to-Contact-Tracing.pdf](https://www.stmarysinfants.herts.sch.uk/home/customer/www/stmarysinfants.herts.sch.uk/public_html/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/20210716-Update-to-Contact-Tracing.pdf)

Our protective measures in school will, therefore, be reflecting those changes and life in school will largely be returning to **'normal'**.

- To maintain child safety, please avoid stopping your cars outside the school gates.
- We will no longer be adhering to year group 'bubbles' and, therefore, be resuming regular assemblies, lunches in the dining room and mixed outdoor play.
- Children should come to school in their PE kits on the days they have PE lessons. (see note below regarding the first couple of days)
- Regular handwashing/sanitising will continue, as previously, and adults/visitors will be given an option to wear face coverings, if they choose.
- As previously, we will continue to have windows open across the site to maintain ventilation.
- Please do not send your child to school if they are unwell with Covid or any other illnesses/symptoms.

#### **Current DFE advice**

**If you suspect your child has coronavirus or has a positive test, do not send your child to school if:**

- they are showing one or more coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms  
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/>
- they have had a positive test result
- there are other reasons requiring them to stay at home, for example, they are required to quarantine <https://www.gov.uk/uk-border-control/self-isolating-when-you-arrive>.

You should follow public health advice on when to self-isolate and what to do.  
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/when-to-self-isolate-and-what-to-do/>

'Children and young people aged under 18 years 6 months, who usually attend school who have been identified as a close contact **should** continue to attend school as normal. Further information is available in the stay at home: guidance for households.'

<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 our own internal monitoring, if your child is identified as a 'close contact', although they no longer need to isolate, it would be helpful if you would please let us know as soon as possible.

Please note, all of the above will be superseded if there is a local 'outbreak' and we have to implement additional measures as advised by the Public Health England Health Protection Team.

Whilst measures are being relaxed, please do bear in mind that many people will still be anxious or need to protect themselves from Covid19, for various reasons, and may want to keep some of the previous measures in place for the time being. Some parents may wish to continue to socially distance and wear masks whilst dropping off their children and this is actively supported.

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Face coverings should still be worn in enclosed and crowded spaces where you may come into contact with people that you don't normally meet. We therefore actively advise parents to continue to wear a mask at drop off and distance when possible.

### **Additional Measures**

Whilst will be returning to normal practice for most things in school for the children, we will be operating a more cautious hybrid approach to meeting with parents in school for the first few weeks. Socially distanced meetings with parents face to face can take place, with **agreed appointments only**, so that we can ensure all Covid-19 measures and controls are in place prior to meetings. Some parents or members of our staff team, for various reasons, may wish to meet virtually or outside, if the weather is fine, and this can also be accommodated.

### **Opening Times**

- Gates open: 8.45am (This is the first gate that you arrive at as you walk up St Mary's Way.)
- Classroom doors open: 8.50am
- Registers taken: 8.55am (gates will be closed to parents at around this time so that outdoor learning can take place as promptly as possible)
- Collection time: 3.10pm
- Gates will open to parents at 3.05pm
- If your child has a sibling at the Juniors, then please drop off at the Juniors first.
- Once the gates are closed, late arrivals will need to go to the school office.

### **Other Information**

- Please ensure that you provide your child with a filled water bottle (water only).
- There will be no PE in the first two days of term and so PE kits will not be required until the first full week.
- Wellies will be required for Reception pupils; however Key Stage 1 teachers will request parents to provide wellies at times through the year when required.
- We will be sending all pupils home by the Friday of the first week of term with a home-school diary. This will be for parents to record home-learning in and will be signed by parents and teachers weekly. These will be used for learning only and as they will not be checked by staff every day, any other information e.g. home time pick up arrangements etc should be communicated directly with the class teacher/school office to ensure that messages have been received. We hope that you enjoy receiving this new addition to our St Mary's brand.

On behalf of all the staff at St Mary's, we very much look forward to welcoming you back on Thursday next week and hope that you continue to enjoy the summer break until then.

Yours sincerely,



Miss Verity Edey  
Headteacher