



# Sandford St. Martin's

P R I M A R Y S C H O O L

Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

I am writing to let you know the planned setup for classes/staffing in September 2020. No registration groups have been mixed up for the new school year so your child will be with the same children as they were when the school moved to partial closure/lock down. We welcome **Miss Robbins** to take up a vacancy generated by Mrs Bolar moving on to a new school. We say goodbye to Mrs Bolar, Mrs Jones, Mrs Steward, Mr Townend and Miss Dando in 2 weeks time. Mrs Jones is moving in a new career direction whilst both Mr Townend and Miss Dando leave us to train as teachers (perhaps we will see them again soon!?). Mrs Steward's contract has come to an end after 7 years supporting children with SEN and we wish her very well too.

The whole class moves are indicated with corresponding arrows to our new set-up:

<u>Current</u> Year group 19-20	<u>Current</u> registration groups/staffing		<u>New</u> registration groups/staffing for September 2020 (new/changes to staff placements in bold)
Pre	Nursery/preschools/home settings	R	Acorns – Mrs Abrahams and Mrs Willis
			Conkers – Mrs Matthews and Mrs Derham
R	Acorns – Mrs Abrahams with Mrs Willis	⇒ 1	Bay – Miss Walker and <b>Mrs Miller</b>
	Conkers – Mrs Matthews with Mrs Derham	⇒ 1	Ash – <b>Miss Robbins</b> and <b>Mrs Clemas</b>
1	Ash – Mrs Dowthwaite/Mrs Davies (was Mrs Salkeld)	⇒ 2	Beech – <b>Mr Sampson</b> and Mrs Shipton
	Bay – Miss Walker with Mrs Clemas	⇒ 2	Elm – <b>Mrs Hudson/Mrs Davies</b> and Miss Wessely Mrs Davies M, Tu Mrs Hudson W, Th, F
2	Beech – Miss Hyde with Mrs Shipton	⇒ 3	Hazel – <b>Mrs Dowthwaite/Mrs Driver</b> and Mrs Crook Mrs Douthwaite M, Tu, F Mrs Driver W Th
	Elm – Mrs Bolar with Miss Wessely	⇒ 3	Lilac – Mrs Malleson and Mrs Crook
3	Lilac – Mrs Malleson with Mrs Crook	⇒ 4	Hawthorn – Mr Gale and Mrs Motton
	Hazel – Mr Sampson with Mrs Crook	⇒ 4	Maple – Miss Colley/Mrs Stanley and <b>Mrs Motton</b> Miss Colley M, T, W Mrs Stanley Th, F
4	Maple – Miss Colley/Mrs Stanley with Mr Townend	⇒ 5	Olive – <b>Miss Jones</b> and Mrs Lee
	Hawthorn – Mr Gale with Mrs Motton	⇒ 5	Willow – Mrs Hill/Mrs Vinton and Miss Orchard Mrs Hill M, Tu, W Mrs Vinton Th, F
5	Olive – Mrs Holt with Mrs Lee	⇒ 6	Pine – <b>Mrs Holt</b> and Mrs Hardy
	Willow – Mrs Hill/Mrs Vinton with Mrs Jones	⇒ 6	Oak – Mr Dean and Mrs Oliver

Miss Hyde continues with us in a 'cover' role on Thursdays and Fridays too.

As well as over 40 new Saplings, we look forward to welcoming about 8 new children from Year One to Year Five too. The school roll for September is anticipated to be about 380 children.

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**Further to the actual class/staffing allocations I'm sure you are keen to know what school might look like?**

Yesterday the government released a detailed 35 page document about their intention for all children to return to school. We still have significant planning and risk assessment to undertake in response to this guidance, which I'm sure you'll appreciate will take a number of days. I have attached a 'summary' of the guidance on the pages below with some annotations, as well as a link to the full document for those who wish to access it.

At this time I cannot give any helpful details about school timings in September. We are being asked to stagger start and end times as we are for bubbles this side of the Summer holidays. I have annotated the summary guidance below to give you all an indication of our planning at this stage, and areas which will be communicated in the coming weeks.

**Summary of Guidance for full school opening (thanks to the NAHT)- released on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) 02/07/20**

This summary focuses primarily on the logistical questions that our school is working on answers for. There are a number of other important areas in the detailed guidance from the DfE that are not covered in this document. [Mr Beveridge's notes are in blue](#)

### Key points

- The government has set out its intent and plan for all children to return to school full time from the start of September. It is based on a **twin strategy of limiting contact between pupils and implementing hygiene measures**
- Schools are told that **"all elements of the 'system of controls' are essential", but "the way different schools implement some of the requirements will differ based on their individual circumstances."**
- Schools will be familiar with many aspects of the system of controls already, eg thorough and regular handwashing and promoting good respiratory hygiene (the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach)
- The main changes relate to how contact between individuals is to be limited in schools. Contact is to be limited in two main ways:
  1. By ensuring pupils remain in consistent groups ('bubbles') wherever possible, thereby minimising the number of contacts between different people across the school
  2. By maintaining distance between individuals wherever possible ('social distancing'). You can find more details on these measures below.

*\* we expect 'bubbles' to be as large as full classes or even year groups to support education and staffing needs.*

- The DfE states **"if schools follow the guidance set out here, they can be confident they are managing risk effectively."**



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- Schools are told that it is a **legal requirement that they now revisit and update their covid-19 risk assessments** and **consult with staff** (we have 10 working days to achieve this and communicate it)
- Schools are also being asked to prepare a 'plan b', ie arrangements to allow remote learning to take place should a partial or full closure of the school be required, at any point in the next academic year. The government has set out in its guidance expectations around what those arrangements should include. It has also outlined the optional support that will be offered to schools in the coming days and weeks to help them develop such arrangements.

We intend to maintain class dojo even with full classes returning, and will use it for home learning and communication. We are also developing Google Classroom in the background utilizing a DfE grant. This will help to futureproof our online learning and computing curriculum.

## School uniform

- It is for the governing body of a school (or the academy trust, in the case of academies) to make decisions regarding school uniform. Some schools may have relaxed their uniform policy while only certain categories of pupils were attending. We would, however, encourage all schools to return to their usual uniform policies in the autumn term. Uniform can play a valuable role in contributing to the ethos of a school and setting an appropriate tone.
- Uniforms do not need to be cleaned any more often than usual, nor do they need to be cleaned using methods which are different from normal.
- Schools should consider how pupil non-compliance is managed, taking a mindful and considerate approach in relation to parents who may be experiencing financial pressures.

We would like children to wear full school uniform where possible, and would emphasise that the washing of clothes does reduce contamination/infection spread. Clothing with the school logo is preferable, including the school's white PE top, cardigan or jumper. We understand uniform may be in shorter supply, some families will not have been able to replace uniforms that have been outgrown etc. Until half term we will have a 'relaxed' and less insistent approach to uniform. Any alternative clothing worn must be plain and practical. No open toed shoes, additional jewelry or hair accessories are appropriate.

## Minimising contact - 'bubbles' and group sizes

- The main and most pressing logistical consideration for schools is determining **group or 'bubble' sizes for September**. The DfE has said that, ideally, bubbles will be kept as small as possible, ie the size of a class. **However, where this restricts a school's ability to deliver a full curriculum, schools have the flexibility to implement year group bubbles.** Primary schools may find it is possible to work on the basis of class bubbles.

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## Social distancing within bubbles

- The DfE has stated that social distancing and bubbles should **not be seen as alternative options** and that both measures "will help". However, it points out that "the balance between them (social distancing and use of bubbles) will change depending on children's ability to distance, the layout of the school and the feasibility of keeping distinct groups separate while offering a broad curriculum (especially at secondary)." It also states "when staff or children cannot maintain distancing, particularly with younger children in primary schools, the risk can also be reduced by keeping pupils in the smaller, class-sized groups."

## We have some decisions to make here about the layout of Saplings class as a 'double' base

- It goes on to say that "it is likely that for younger children, the emphasis will be on separating groups, and for older children, it will be on distancing. For children old enough, they should also be supported to maintain distance and not touch staff where possible."
- Another important point it makes is that "both the approaches of separating groups and maintaining distance are not 'all or nothing' options and will still bring benefits even if implemented partially. Some schools may keep children in their class groups for the majority of the classroom time but also allow mixing into wider groups for specialist teaching, wraparound care and transport. Siblings may also be in different groups. Endeavouring to keep these groups at least partially separate and minimising contacts between children will still offer public health benefits as it reduces the network of possible direct transmission."
- The DfE has recognised that strict social distancing will not always be possible, especially with primary-aged pupils. The guidance specifically states "we recognise that younger children will not be able to maintain social distancing, and it is acceptable for them not to distance within their group."
- All schools, in particular primary schools, are encouraged to take a realistic and pragmatic approach in this regard. This may include reminding children of the need to give each other space where possible; some schools may consider using a simple 'no touching' approach to help children understand the need to maintain distance. However, the reality is that to fit all pupils in a classroom, they are likely to be in close proximity. The DfE has accepted that pupils will need to be sat close to each other in most classrooms (The DfE recommends that pupils sit side-by-side and do not face each other if this is possible)

## We are working on practical classroom layouts with teachers

- If older children can maintain social distancing, they are encouraged to do so. The DfE states "for children old enough, they should also be supported to maintain distance and not touch staff where possible." If this is possible for older children in primary too, that is to be encouraged, but as the DfE has made clear, it is not an essential requirement
- The DfE has stated that pupils passing each other briefly in a corridor or playground (eg walking past each other) is a relatively 'low risk', but that schools should try to avoid large groups of pupils mixing together in these spaces at the same time.

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We are working on corridor circulation, school meals and toileting

## School staff

- The DfE has said that teachers are permitted to move between bubbles. While it is advisable to minimise movement if and where possible, the reality is that this will not always be possible, especially in a secondary context. This also means that PPA teachers can teach across different groups

In our larger than average primary school, some staff will need to work across bubbles

- Supply teachers, peripatetic teachers, therapists and other specialists are permitted to move between schools. These teachers are advised to ensure they minimise contact and maintain as much distance as possible from other staff

We are liaising with our instrumental music teachers and other specialists

- An important section on staffing and social distancing states "Ideally, adults should maintain two-metre distance from each other and children. We know that this is not always possible, particularly when working with younger children, but if adults can do this when circumstances allow, it will help. In particular, they should avoid close face-to-face contact and minimise time spent within one metre of anyone. Similarly, it will not be possible when working with many pupils who have complex needs or who need close contact care. These pupils' educational and care support should be provided as normal.... When staff or children cannot maintain distancing, particularly with younger children in primary schools, the risk can also be reduced by keeping pupils in the smaller, class-sized groups."

Yes, I'm confused too – and we are seeking further clarity

- The guidance suggests that use of staffrooms should be minimised and staff should aim to maintain social distancing within such spaces.

## Other important measures

- There should be **no large gatherings** bringing different groups together, eg whole-school assemblies.
- Schools are encouraged to **consider staggered break and lunchtimes**, and schools must clean dining halls between groups.

We plan to continue to use the classrooms to eat lunch in

- Where possible, schools have also been asked to consider **staggered start and finish times** to keep different bubbles apart as they arrive at and leave schools. However, schools are asked to ensure that the total amount of teaching time pupils receive remains the same, eg an earlier start would mean an earlier finish for pupils.

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This is significant and will take time to plan – especially considering the car park, classroom door areas, wet weather pick up/drop off, Sandmartins before and after school, and siblings in different Year groups. This is not a small job.

## Breakfast and after school clubs/wrap around care

- Schools can run breakfast and after-school clubs, although they may need additional time to get these back up and running. The DfE has stated that ideally schools would keep to the bubbles used during the school day, but recognised this **might not be possible**. It has stated that **"if it is not possible to maintain bubbles being used during the school day, then schools should use small, consistent groups."**

We are liaising with Val and her team at Sandmartins

## Equipment and resources

The DfE has stated the following:

- For individual and very frequently used equipment, such as pencils and pens, it is recommended that staff and pupils have their own items that are not shared
- Classroom-based resources, such as books and games, can be used and shared within the bubble; these should be cleaned regularly, along with all frequently touched surfaces
- Resources that are shared between classes or bubbles, such as sports, art and science equipment, should be cleaned frequently and meticulously and always between bubbles, or rotated to allow them to be left unused and out of reach for 48 hours (72 hours for plastics) between use by different bubbles
- Outdoor playground equipment should be more frequently cleaned
- It is recommended that pupils limit the amount of equipment they bring into school each day to essentials, such as lunch boxes, hats, coats, books, stationery and mobile phones. Bags are allowed.

This is how we are currently working and ask parents to support us with this. This does mean NO pencil cases or toys. A WATER BOTTLE is missing from the DfE's list of essential equipment!

- Pupils and teachers can take books and other shared resources home, although unnecessary sharing should be avoided, especially where this does not contribute to pupil education and development. Similar rules on hand cleaning, cleaning of the resources and rotation should apply to these resources

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## PE

- The DfE has stated that "pupils should be kept in consistent groups, sports equipment thoroughly cleaned between each use by different individual groups, and contact sports avoided."
- Furthermore, "outdoor sports should be prioritised where possible, and large indoor spaces used where it is not, maximising distancing between pupils and paying scrupulous attention to cleaning and hygiene."

We are working on this basis and do not know about changing for PE at this stage

## Curriculum and remote learning

- In terms of the curriculum, the document states "school leaders will be best placed to understand the needs of their schools and communities, and to make informed judgments about how to balance delivering a broad and balanced curriculum."
- It also states a key principle that "**the curriculum remains broad and ambitious: all pupils continue to be taught a wide range of subjects.**"
- For key stages one and two, it specifically states "the curriculum should remain broad so that the majority of pupils are taught a full range of subjects over the year, including sciences, humanities, the arts, physical education/sport, religious education and relationships and health education."

We intend to prioritise Reading, Writing and Maths and Mental Health/well being, but deliver as full a curriculum as possible in terms of wider subjects

- Within the curriculum guidance, the government has set a series of key expectations. An important point is "up to and including key stage three, prioritisation within subjects of the most important components for progression is likely to be more effective than removing subjects." In practice, this means that schools will naturally be looking at whether or not they need to make adjustments to their curriculum based on their assessments of pupils' learning and progress as they return to school. This is likely to involve considering which key concepts missed from the summer term now need to be covered.

We will be checking the children's skills and knowledge regularly and utilising additional government funding for catch up support where necessary. Children's progress will be formally tracked in September, November, March and May/June with regular ongoing 'low stakes' assessments and quizzes throughout the weeks.

## Additional points

- Domestic day trips (not overnight) are permitted to resume in the autumn term, subject to protective measures being taken  
We are unsure what will happen for the Y6 residential at this point (usually in Autumn) it is likely we will seek to do this Spring or Summer to give time for the pandemic to be more 'known', guidance to be precise and parents to be clear on parameters and costings. Other school trips are likely to start as we feel able to assess the safety of transport and venues.
- Face coverings are still not currently required in schools

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- The usual rules on attendance now apply – school is mandatory again from the autumn term.
- The DfE expects that kitchens will be fully open from the start of the autumn term and normal legal requirements will apply about the provision of food to all pupils who want it  
*We do not anticipate this being a problem, but will have the logistics of taking meals to the children or ensuring safe queuing/cleaning of tables for hot meals bubble by bubble.*
- You can find more detailed guidance on issues such as accountability, inspection, exams, curriculum and remote learning within the DfE's guidance document.  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

**First published 02 July 2020** – Full document.

I'm sorry this has been such a long and laborious letter, but I feel it is best to keep you informed with where we are, what's next and where we are working hard on 'gaps'. Ultimately, we will open the school safely to your child on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September if national and local conditions still indicate we can. More information will follow once we have had time to make fuller plans.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Beveridge