



Daventry Rd, Southam, Warwickshire. CV47 1PS  
Tel: (01926) 812512 Fax: (01926) 812521  
[www.stmaryssoutham.org.uk](http://www.stmaryssoutham.org.uk)

14 May 2020

Dear Parents,

You will be aware of the government's recent announcement regarding the reopening of schools and I am sure you are keen to understand how St Mary's will be responding to this.

The current position requires the school to reopen for Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 on the 1st June, closely followed by nursery children. The intention then is to extend this to the whole school later in the month. As you will know, we are already looking after a number of children (including those of key workers) and this will continue alongside these new requirements.

The government's guidance suggests that we should split children into groups of no more than 15 (8 for nursery), stagger the start and end of the day, keep children in groups and not allow them to mix with other groups, stagger lunch and playtimes - all whilst maintaining a 2 metre distance.

Whilst we will do our utmost to keep everyone safe, with our space and staffing constraints and the nature of young children, alongside these new requirements, I feel it is important to stress that we cannot practically achieve social distancing in school in the manner suggested. Anyone who has experience of young children will know social distancing is incredibly challenging.

Of course, as a headteacher, I want to have our school community back together and the staff feel the same. We recognise how difficult it is to home-school your children but as the headteacher my main concern is for the safety and wellbeing of our whole school community. There is still not currently widespread testing or a vaccine for this terrible virus.

It will of course be your decision as to whether you send your children back to school. The government have expressly stated that parents should not be penalised if they decide to keep their child(ren) at home and we certainly will not be taking any action. Self-isolating principles still continue to apply so we will continue to monitor children that do return and will send any home that show symptoms and they will be required to follow the government advice on self-isolation.

Schools and governors across the country were only made aware of the proposed changes as they were announced on Sunday and details are continuing to emerge. As a school, we are doing everything we can to develop our strategy, but you will appreciate it is challenging when there are many issues to consider.

At a practical level, we have lots of physical space in Key Stage 2, but at present a significant number of the staff are being shielded working from home (including some teachers) and for now it seems the shielding may well continue.





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This means, that towards the end of June, I may not have the staff to allow the whole school to function as normal, even before social distancing requirements are factored in. We will work on strategies to address this and I will keep you updated as our plans evolve.

In the meantime, it would be very helpful to gain a detailed understanding of how parents and carers feel about sending their children back into school and what approach you are likely to adopt. This will allow us to plan accordingly.

With this in mind, we would really appreciate it if you would take a few moments to complete the questionnaire on the website.

Please visit [www.stmaryssoutham.org.uk](http://www.stmaryssoutham.org.uk) for all the latest information and a link to the questionnaire. Please complete the questionnaire for each child you have at the school.

Yours sincerely,  
Jane Price  
Headteacher

