

Returning to School – FAQs for Parents

We have recently received a number of email and phone calls about the reopening of school and understand that parents have a number of queries about sending their children back to school.

As we are sure you can understand there are some questions at this stage we are unable to answer. However we thought it would be helpful to compile a frequently asked question list with the answers we can give at this stage.

Will the school be open full time?

No. In general, the school days are slightly shorter, particularly on Fridays where the school closes earlier to ensure that there is sufficient time to complete a deeper clean of the setting. Timings and locations are shown below:

Year Group	Monday to Thursday		Friday	Gate
	Drop-off	Collection	Collection	
Nursery	9.15	11.45	11.45	Acre Road
Reception	9.15	14.00	12.45	Elm Road
Year 1	9.00	14.15	13.00	Elm Road
Year 6	8.45	14.30	13.15	Elm Road
Keyworkers	9.00	15.00	15.00	Acre Road

If we decide 'yes' to send our child back, could we reverse this decision at any point?

If you change your mind at any point, that is fine - just let us know via email.

How can I keep myself safe when dropping off/collecting my child?

1. Please stick strictly to the timings for your child's group and ensure that both you and your child stays with you whilst waiting.
2. Walk if you possibly can.
3. Avoid sharing cars or giving lifts to members of a different household.

What if my child displays symptoms whilst at school?

We plan to use the meeting room for placing any child who is unwell and needs collection. Your child will be cared for safely by the member of staff supervising. A member of staff may wear PPE in case your child needs assistance and you will be asked to collect your child from the Acre Road entrance.

What will happen if my child is upset coming into school?

Your child will need to be able to enter school by themselves with verbal encouragement from the staff greeting them. Unfortunately, we will not be able to hold their hand going into class but rest assured we will of course do all we can to reassure them. If your child is unable to enter by themselves, we will need to ask you to return home with your child. However, we will

then continue to work with you to find a solution so that they are able to enter school happily on another day.

What will happen if my child is upset or distressed whilst in school, will they still be comforted?

Of course. Whilst we will be doing all we can to maintain a distance, children and staff are grouped in smaller bubbles which will not mix in order to allow us to intervene if really necessary although our aim would be to talk to them to reassure them. We would not dream of leaving your child visibly upset. If we were unable to comfort them we would call you to collect them.

Will the children have different teachers? Be placed in different classes?

We do not have a full complement of staff yet and although some teaching staff will be the same, because of the small numbers, some children will be in different rooms with different staff to start with at least, until we are sure it is safe to combine classes.

Will the curriculum be started straight away for children returning?

Yes, we will be following the Early Years Curriculum for children in Nursery and Reception and the National Curriculum for children for Years 1 and Year 6 and this will start on their return.

What will the children learn in school?

Once the children return to school we do want them to enjoy their learning just as they did before, but it will be different. The range of activities we will be able to offer will be limited. The guidance indicates that the provision in Nursery, Reception and Year 1 should focus on basic skills and Year 6 should focus on skills needed for moving onto Secondary School. There will be no after school activities / clubs.

Will children be learning more about 'Anxiety & Mental Health' rather than focusing on the curriculum?

We are aware that some children will have been more exposed to the news / conversations about the pandemic than others. Our aim is to keep things 'as normal as possible' at school for the children, but things will be different. It will be about addressing these differences and explaining them in an appropriate way, e.g. washing hands to stop germs spreading. Our response to anxiety and mental health will be on a more individual basis, it has to be - every family and child has had a different experience.

What social distancing measures will be applied?

Children will be sat at their own desk, which have been spaced apart as much as possible and that will be their base for the day. In reception, this is more difficult because children will find it difficult to follow and remember this rule.

Will my child be reminded to keep away from others?

Yes but in an age appropriate way and in such a way as to both help them understand the need for this but also to avoid frightening them. For example, we might direct a very young child to another table or area to play.

My child has been in a keyworker group and their class is returning to school. What will happen?

The keyworker groups will continue in a similar way to now. Parents should choose whether they want their children to attend school in a keyworker group or a class group. For parents of

children in classes returning to school who require provision beyond the regular school day we would suggest that their child stays in the keyworker group as they can attend the Breakfast Club (from 8am) and After School Club (to 5pm).

As guidelines state that groups are not allowed to mix, children are not able to swap from a class group to a keyworker group and vice versa. Keyworker children should only attend school when there is no one to look after them at home.

Will the children be wearing uniform?

Children are expected to wear full school uniform including school shoes. We appreciate that many of the children have grown and shopping for new uniform / shoes is hard at this time so please can parents do the best they can and substitute with appropriate alternatives where needed.

What will children need to bring in to school?

Children will need to bring their PE kit and a filled water bottle. They will also need to bring in any medication such as inhalers or adrenaline auto-injectors (e.g. EpiPens).

I assume my child will require their own stationery?

No – all equipment / stationery will be provided in an individual plastic folder to each child which will not be shared with other children.

Can children wear masks and gloves?

In line with guidance from the government, children should not wear PPE, including gloves or masks.

Can we send the children part-time on the days we work?

The guidance from the Government is that schools should offer a full-time place where the school is able to do so. The curriculum will be planned for the week and therefore attending each day will avoid disruption to your child's learning.

Can we send children to school at a later date?

The DfE has advised that parents will not be fined if their child does not attend school. If you do decide to send them at a later date, the school will require advance notice as this may affect the arrangements we have in place for the groupings of the children.

If my child stays at home will you support with home learning?

When the children return to school, we will be teaching them the curriculum they would usually have learnt in the summer term with some catch up where needed. We will try and replicate this as far as possible with what we make available for children not at school, but some of the curriculum we will be teaching at school may not be transferable to home learning.

Will my child be with their friends?

The classteachers know the children well and will arrange the bubbles / groups. We will take account where we can of friendship groups however, children will not be able to choose which bubble they are in and will not be able to change bubbles. You will have seen on the news that as part of the return to school, we are instructed to reduce contact between bubbles and so children may not be able to see all of their friends. Please consider this when deciding if you want your child to return to school.

How many children will be in the group?

We do not know exactly how many children are in each group until we know how many children are returning to school. From the survey that parents have completed, we know that the numbers will be between 10-12 children in each group. There will not be more than 15 children total in a classroom.

I will need to bring a younger sibling(s) to pick up/drop off – will this be a problem?

If you are coming by foot, we ask for younger siblings to be in a buggy/carrier if they are not able to respect social distancing guidelines due to their age.

Will I still be able to visit the school office?

The office will remain closed unless an appointment is made. We request that parents contact the school office by telephone or email.

What will the lunch arrangement be?

For children who normally have a school lunch a school packed lunch will be provided. Parents do not need to order these online. Children will be asked in the morning as to which filling they would like for their sandwich (cheese, ham, egg or tuna). For children who usually bring a packed lunch they will be able to do so. Lunchboxes will be kept under their desk and children will eat their lunch with their group. This maybe in the classroom or outside. Information on payment for school meals for Year 6 will be provided shortly.

If you have any further questions which you would like answered, please email us at office@stlukes.rbksch.org and we will get back to you.

Thank you for your continued support.