



1<sup>st</sup> September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

As we prepare to welcome students back for the start of a new academic year, I write to update you with plans for school reopening. I should restate that St Mary's will open full time to all year groups. We are very excited to return to learning on site. I again encourage you to follow this [link to guidance](#) for parents and carers in order to familiarise yourselves with the basis on which the national decision to reopen schools has been made.

You will not be surprised to hear that there will be some initial adjustment to our daily experience and we have worked through the summer to refine measures for safer working practices and to generally prepare the school. Students will receive a full reintegration programme which will include details of new routines and practices. As promised in the letter from our CEO / Executive head teacher Mr Ged Fitzpatrick, I provide some of the key principles and associated measures for St Mary's College below.

It remains our view that the most effective way to respond to the 'systems of control' laid down in government guidance, whilst maintaining an effective learning environment, is through a **zoning model**. 'Year group bubbles' will be established and their movement will be carefully managed in order to minimise mixing of the school population during school hours.

I would like to draw your attention to the following:

- The school would be separated into specific zones to include Years 7,8,9,10,11 and post 16. Post 16 students will also be encouraged to maintain distance and take additional ownership of the 'system of controls' in their own environment. Zones will have everything students will need throughout the day, including teaching spaces, an indoor social space and a designated outdoor space as well as toilet and handwashing facilities. They will be broadly consistent in terms of location with current Year group bases where students begin the day in their forms.
- Students will be expected to remain in their zone throughout the school day and will be provided with coloured lanyards for ease of identification.
- Specific teachers / identified staff will move between zones in order to enable delivery of the **full curriculum** and will therefore make every effort to maintain distance in their practice. Where possible pupils are expected to maintain a respectful distance from their peers and teachers when not in a classroom.
- Reusable St Mary's branded face masks will be provided to all staff and students. We will be required to wear these face masks outside of lesson time when inside a school building. Face masks will not be required in designated outdoor spaces within zones and can be removed when eating or drinking. Two masks will be made available to allow for washing and wearing.
- Application of the 'system of controls' includes ensuring that any individual displaying symptoms does not attend school, effective hand washing/sanitising routines, good respiratory hygiene practice and enhanced cleaning protocols.

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Executive Head/CEO.  
Mr G Fitzpatrick

Head of School  
Mr D Perry





### **Breakfast, Break and Lunch**

All year groups will have access to hot and cold food in their zone. On at least two days a week Years 7-11 will be granted exclusive access to either the Canteen or our Academy café. Post 16 students will retain their normal use of 'The Pod' throughout the day. It is **important that payment cards are credited regularly using Parent Pay**. Access to 'revaluer machines' on site will be restricted.

### **Entry and Exit**

An enhanced duty presence will focus on maintaining swift movement into and out of zones at the beginning and end of the day. Face masks will be required when entering and exiting the site. New lanyards should be visible immediately from arrival so staff can direct movement appropriately.

### **Travel**

If your child uses a school bus then you will receive a separate communication detailing expectations. School buses will offer less flexibility than they ordinarily would with revised protocols in place. We encourage students to walk or cycle where possible and we have made additional provision for zoned bike parking. If using public transport, there is an expectation that students adhere to national requirements and follow rules laid down by service providers.

### **School will reopen as follows:**

September 7<sup>th</sup> – Staff INSET

September 9<sup>th</sup> – Year 7 and Year 12 return to school to receive a deferred transition.

September 14<sup>th</sup> – All other Year groups return to school.

There has been some temporary revision to policies and procedures to reflect the adjusted organisation of the school for the start of the academic year. These are now available on the website. Please familiarise yourself with these particularly with the addendum to our behaviour policy. There will also be some temporary physical alterations to the site to accommodate plans, particularly in the first half term whilst we negotiate the period prior to release of our new building.

In forming necessary decisions, we continue to make every effort to respond to the science and the guidance we receive. These will inevitably evolve, as will our thinking, and all decisions are subject to ongoing review. I appreciate that the coming weeks will present some anxiety beyond that ordinarily associated with a new academic year. As outlined in the recent letter from Ged Fitzpatrick, it is our view that the balance of risk is strongly in favour of children being back in classrooms. Regardless of the current context, we remain relentlessly focused on ensuring the highest standards of learning and progress.

Thank you in anticipation for your continued and deeply valued support.

Yours sincerely

Mr D Perry - **Head of School**

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