

Archdiocese of Birmingham  
**St. Gerard's Catholic Primary School and Nursery**  
Head Teacher: Mr A Crehan



Yatesbury Avenue, Castle Vale, Birmingham, B35 6LB

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents,

I wrote to you last week to inform you that following the announcement from the Prime Minister, the Department for Education stated that, "From the week commencing 1 June 2020 at the earliest, we will be asking primary schools to welcome back children in Nursery, Reception, year 1 and year 6, alongside priority groups." Since this announcement we have been working extremely hard to plan for this eventuality.

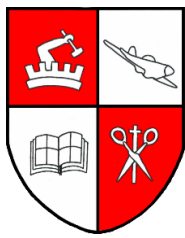
All of our decisions have been centred around the safety and wellbeing of our school community: our children, families and staff. It is important to recognise that a school is not just for children, but a range of staff, and we have a duty of care to all. We have a phased approach where we will gradually increase the numbers over a number of weeks. This will enable us to establish clear routines for safe drop-off and collection, and time to educate the children on the new processes in school, and ultimately limit risk.

As I mentioned in last week's letter, the guidance says that we should place the children in groups known as 'bubbles' for their time in school. These bubbles will have a maximum of two members of staff in them. Once established, the bubbles will stay together and not swap or change. Once a year group has returned, and you have chosen to send your child/children to school, they will be placed into that bubble and will be expected to attend school full-time. We cannot accommodate children coming in for different times and days.

When planning for Nursery and Reception, we believe that part time attendance will be the most positive and beneficial approach, as it will support the children's personal, social and emotional transition back into their educational setting. We plan to offer a morning session where a 'bubble' of children will attend from 9.00am – 11.30am. Then a thorough clean of the classroom and resources will take place in preparation for the afternoon session where a different 'bubble' of children will attend from 12.30pm – 3.00pm. This approach will mean that your child will be in their own classroom with a familiar member of staff. It is only by doing this that we are able to accommodate the other year groups with the number of classrooms we have.

In Year 1 and in Year 6, we plan to have a full-time approach but with a delayed start of 9.30am and an earlier finish at 2.30pm. The staggered starts will allow us to move Nursery and Reception on and off site without mixing with other bubbles. It will also limit parents' exposure at the gates.

School will undoubtedly be a different place when your child returns, and our full guidance will follow in the next few weeks. Activities we normally do at this time of year will sadly not happen. Large gatherings are still not allowed, so there will be no leavers' mass or assemblies. Parents will not be allowed on site. Children will only be able to mix within their bubbles at a safe distance. Break and lunch times will be timetabled to ensure bubbles do not cross. The classrooms will also look very different. The desks will be separated, and the resources will be limited. Bringing items such as bags, books, pencil cases into school will not be allowed, and likewise, reading books and homework will not be sent home. Despite all of this, our staff will be working hard to identify children's needs and continue to support their personal, social and health education in particular at this time.



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Our phased approach is set out below.

- Week beginning 25th May**

SCHOOL CLOSED TO ALL PUPILS:

The site team will be preparing all the classrooms to meet the requirements set out by the DfE. Much of our furniture will be moved into storage, including most of the practical equipment from Nursery and Reception classrooms to avoid the spread of infection. The school building and kitchens will also have a 'deep clean' and essential maintenance will be completed.

- Week beginning 1st June**

SCHOOL OPEN TO KEYWORKERS AND VULNERABLE PUPILS:

The school will open on 1st June to the Key workers and the vulnerable children that have already been attending. Despite many companies and businesses reopening – the definition of a 'keyworker' has not changed. **You must only send your child if it has already been agreed with school.**

During this week school staff will be back in school and will receive training in adapted Safeguarding and Health & Safety procedures. The school Governors responsible for Health & Safety and Safeguarding will also meet with school leaders to complete a very detailed risk assessment.

- Week beginning 8th June**

SCHOOL OPEN TO KEYWORKERS AND VULNERABLE PUPILS, AND INCREASING NUMBERS (see below)

8th June	9th June	10th June	11th June	12th June
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keyworkers</li> <li>• Vulnerable</li> <li>• <b>Nur (PT)</b></li> <li>• <b>Rec (PT)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keyworkers</li> <li>• Vulnerable</li> <li>• Nur (PT)</li> <li>• Rec (PT)</li> <li>• <b>Y6 (FT)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keyworkers</li> <li>• Vulnerable</li> <li>• Nur (PT)</li> <li>• Rec (PT)</li> <li>• Y6 (FT)</li> <li>• <b>Y1 (FT)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keyworkers</li> <li>• Vulnerable</li> <li>• Nur (PT)</li> <li>• Rec (PT)</li> <li>• Y6 (FT)</li> <li>• Y1 (FT)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keyworkers</li> <li>• Vulnerable</li> <li>• Nur (PT)</li> <li>• Rec (PT)</li> <li>• Y6 (FT)</li> <li>• Y1 (FT)</li> </ul>

\*PT = Part Time, FT= Full Time

The final plans to open will be dependent on the government announcements and ongoing risk assessments. When we have this, I will write to you again with more detailed guidance specific to your child's year group. Thank you to the many of you who managed to complete the survey I sent out last week. I have spoken to many of you and received emails, and I understand that you are unsure at this time. Please continue to listen to the advice issued by the government, and to monitor what is happening with the virus. Many things will change I am sure. You must do what you feel is right for your child and you have our full support whatever your decision will be. Schools will not be enforcing attendance nor will fines be issued.

Please continue to stay safe and alert.

You continue to be in our prayers and thoughts.

God bless.

**A Crehan**  
Headteacher