



## St Nicholas School

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**20<sup>th</sup> July 2020**

Dear Parents

I am writing to let you know about the arrangements for September. Since the relaxing of some of the lockdown rules and new advice to schools, we have been working hard to revise our risk assessment and make sure that all pupils can return to school, as advised by the government.

In addition we have had to deal with around 50 new admissions to the school, and ongoing building work. This has involved a lot of recruitment of new staff during lockdown.

### **Lockdown Easing**

Parents should be aware that the current situation with regard to Covid-19 in Croydon is very stable. On a weekly basis, the number of cases has dropped to around 10 across the whole borough, and many of these are in hospitals and care homes. We have had several symptomatic staff and pupils over the last three weeks, all who have been tested and every test has been negative.

Nevertheless, we need to remain vigilant to prevent a local outbreak and the previous situation returning. We support the idea of pupils returning to school, as the effect of them losing out on their education is now greater the risk posed from catching the virus.

We have revised our Risk Assessment to enable us to open fully from September, and unless there are local issues relating to changes in infection rates, we believe we will be able to operate whilst keeping the risk of infection low.

The key points which parents need to be aware of are as follows:

- We will no longer be able to maintain class bubbles within the school. Classes will be mixed on school buses, and we cannot manage small groups in the playground and at lunchtime. Effectively, the whole school will be one bubble.
- Tight controls on cleaning and hygiene will remain in place. Children and Adults entering the school will still be required to sanitise, and regularly wash hands throughout the day. An enhanced cleaning regime will continue to be in place.
- There will be very tight controls in place around people in school who display symptoms of Covid. Parents should keep children at home if they have any symptoms, and obtain a test. If symptoms develop in school, pupils will be isolated and should be collected as soon as possible. They will



Head Teacher: Mr Nick Dry

require testing and can only return to school if a negative result has been obtained, or the child family have self-isolated for 7 days. Any positive test may result in partial or full school closure.

- There will continue to be restrictions on whole school gatherings such as assemblies, which will continue to operate on a virtual basis.

The full assessment can be found on the school web site.

### **Parent Communication changes**

We are changing the way we communicate with parents in September. We will no longer be using the blue contact books and phasing out other methods so that all communication is through a single app. This is called WeDuc. You will shortly be receiving your important login details, and instructions about using the app.

### **Classes in September**

By the end of today all parents should have been emailed details of their child's new class starting in September.

Because of new pupils, new staff and the new building, the process is by no means straightforward. As far as possible, we try to keep children in single year group classes. In some year groups the numbers do not allow an even split into classes, in which case there will be some vertical grouping where children from different year groups are in the same class. These pupils will be put back into single year group classes in subsequent years when the numbers even out.

We do not as a rule keep children with their existing teachers – the only exception to this is children moving from Reception to Year 1. We do find this helps pupils understand such transitions as they get older. The class teachers undertake a thorough handover to ensure the needs of children are understood as they move.

There are other factors involved, including friendship groups, gender balance in classes, and pupils leaving. Decisions are considered very carefully but do involve some difficult compromises. However, all our staff work closely together and work within a curriculum structured to ensure continuity, and our experience over the years has been that children settle in with new teachers very quickly.

### **New appointments**

There are a number of staff changes for you to be aware of:

**Senior Leadership Team** Graham Bolding and Katie Goodwin have been appointed as Deputy Headteachers, in charge of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 respectively.

**New teachers:** Lisa Talbot, Belinda Gregory, Hayley Carr.

**New Teaching Assistants:** Joaquim levandeira, Carly Dalton, Jessica Sammut, Hannah Chapman, Renata Wojtowicz-Lenkiewicz, Lorraine Bryant, Curtis Osborne, Katie Byer.

Natalie Rustige is leaving us following her maternity leave, to bring up her young family.



## **New Building – Remaining work**

We are really pleased with the way the new building is operating, despite the extraordinary circumstances we found ourselves operating under.

In September we will be operating in 22 of the 28 classrooms, and hopefully using more of the additional spaces throughout the school. The remaining work is due to be finished by the end of October and includes:

- Completion of the main entrance on the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor
- Creation of full size car park to enable collection/departure by school transport adjacent to the main entrance.
- Creation of staff car park on main site (currently temporary parking is in place on the school field)
- Creation of outdoor learning area on the site of the old key stage 1 building.
- Creation of a new multi-use games area next to the main playground
- Creation of an outside area for Reception pupils next to the main playground.
- Completion of works held back by Covid, such as the new light sensory room, OT room, and climbing equipment in the school hall.

We will also be holding a short ceremony to bury the Time Capsule under the outdoor learning area.

We would love to show parents around and will let you know when this is possible, depending on lockdown restrictions easing further.

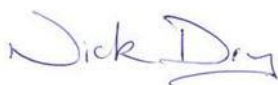
## **Year 6 leavers**

Despite lockdown restrictions, we managed to have emotional goodbye to our Year 6 pupils at a virtual streamed assembly on Tuesday 14th July. As always, we will really miss you, and wish you all the best in your various new schools.

Finally, I would like to say a massive thank you to all our parents for the patience, understanding and resilience you have shown throughout this unbelievably challenging period. We have all been through this together, and I feel it will make our relationship stronger whilst we are still involved with your children in the years to come.

From everyone at St Nicholas, we wish you a happy and peaceful summer break, and look forward to seeing all our children back in September.

Kind regards



Nick Dry, Headteacher

