



ST AGNES Catholic Primary School

With Jesus beside us, we do our best

Rainhill Way, Bow, London, E3 3ER

Tel: 020 8980 3076

Email: office@st-agnes.towerhamlets.sch.uk

Headteacher: Ms B McDaid

18th May 2020

Dear Parents

I hope that you are all keeping safe and well. As a school, we continue to stay open for vulnerable children and children of key workers. It is a strange feeling being in a school that is so quiet. Last week I enjoyed catching up with all the news from Reception children. Teachers also reported that they had lots of enjoyable conversations with the children in their classes. Children, we all miss your energy and laughter whilst learning and at play and are counting down the days until we can be together in a safe way.

I am sure that you will have been keeping a keen eye on the news associated with school and when we will be opening. We are currently working on plans to open for children in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6. To effectively plan, we have contacted all the parents in these year groups and asked them if they will be sending their children in to school. The Government '*strongly encourages*' parents to send their children back to school. However, we understand that there will be some parents who will be extremely anxious about the prospect of their children returning – they may be shielding another member of the family or have a range of other reasons. The Government has said that, although we must take attendance registers and submit these in the usual way, there will not be fines for parents who do not send their children to school. It has also issued guidance regarding extremely vulnerable people.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

We are also making plans on how we will endeavour to socially distance children when they are in school – we will be doing this by opening up more classrooms so that children will be taught in 'small groups' of no more than 15 – minimising the contact they have with other children. We are arranging desks to be at least 2 metres apart. Lunches and



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break times will be staggered to ensure social distancing too. There will be regular cleaning of work stations throughout the day and children will be directed to wash their hands very regularly. Children will have their own equipment – this will not be shared. The start and the end of the day will be staggered and scooters will not be allowed to avoid congestion in school. These are just some of the ways we will be working in order to keep your children as safe as possible.

It will be, however, **impossible to socially distance young children ALL the time**. I would not want to mislead you in this respect. The Government has acknowledged this and we would want to make this very clear to you too.

The Government plan is for the other primary year groups to attend school in some capacity before the end of the summer term. This may prove to be more problematic.

Even though we are making plans and completing a range of Risk Assessments we are very aware that the Teaching Unions are in negotiations with the Government and things may change again. Currently I am anticipating that we open to Nursery and Reception from **8th June** and then seek to stagger the other two classes. As you know this is a constantly changing picture. If you are a key worker seeking a place in the meantime, please get in contact with the school via info@st-agnes.towerhamlets.sch.uk

Best wishes to you and your family,

Ms Brid McDaid

Headteacher