



28th August 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

I would like to take the opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Mrs Natasha Scott and I will be working to support St Michael's as the Executive Headteacher until a Headteacher is appointed. As you know Mrs Ward left St Michael's in the summer to work in another school, however due to the lockdown and on-going situation with Covid-19 the governing body of St Michael's were unable to start the recruitment process for a Headteacher. I will be on site at St Michael's for half the week, when I am not in school Miss Pereira, our very experienced Deputy Headteacher, will deputize in my absence. I have worked in Newham for many years now and I am currently the Headteacher at St Francis' in Stratford. As you may know, the Catholic schools in Newham work very closely and meet regularly so I am familiar with St Michael's.

I want to assure you that we will be working hard as always to provide the highest educational standard for your child. I have heard lots of great things about the pupils, parents and staff at St Michael's and I am very much looking forward to working with the school.

We are busy preparing for the return of all children on Thursday, 3rd September. **Nursery and Reception will have a staggered return please refer to the separate letter that was sent to you with this date.** We have looked carefully at the government guidance that was released before school finished in July and have put necessary steps in place to ensure that school is as safe as possible for all returning children.

If you would like more information on the government advice, please visit the following website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

September 2020

We will welcome all children back, but will keep an eye on the scientific advice so we can adjust to the latest guidance. Children will work in phase bubbles,



however we have had to make some adjustments to the timings of the school day and to the location for dropping off and collecting your child as listed below:

Class	Timings	Location
Nursery	8:30 am - 11:30 am	Drop off via Nursery gate collect via Nursery gate
Reception	8:30 am - 3:05 pm	
Years 1,2 and 3	8:40 am - 3:15 pm	Drop off at main gate Howard Road and leave via Arthur Road exit
Years 4,5 and 6	8:50 am - 3:25 pm	Drop off at main gate Howard Road and leave via Arthur Road exit

For families with children in different classes, for convenience if your children have different start times and collection times you can drop them off in the hall after you have dropped off your youngest child. When collecting your children please come at the collection time you have been given for your oldest child and your other children will be waiting for you in the school hall. Please make sure you move on quickly after dropping off and picking your children up to prevent congestion at the entrances to the school. Any conversations with teachers need to be via email or telephone conversations for the time being. Please also adhere to social distancing at these times and ensure that you queue 2 metres apart. During these difficult times we must insist that only one parent comes to collect children and if you can leave younger siblings at home then please do so.

Breakfast Club

Breakfast Club will recommence from Monday 7th September and a separate letter with details of booking and costs will be sent in due course. Children will be arranged in phase bubbles at these provisions with an adult. These groups will remain consistent where possible and again a clear track and trace system will be in place in case of a confirmed case of Coronavirus.

Lunches

The kitchen will be fully operational from September and hot meals will be provided - children will be able to bring in their own packed lunches.



Control Measures

Since March we had designated one of our cleaners to be in school all day to constantly clean areas that experience high levels of traffic, like the toilets. He has also been cleaning the hotspots of door handles, table tops, emptying tissue bins etc. This enhanced cleaning will continue to ensure our children are kept as safe as possible. Hand washing facilities have been increased and children are directed to wash their hands when they enter the building, after break time before and after lunch and at the end of the day. Hand sanitiser remains readily available and children will continue to be taught the importance of regular and thorough hand washing.

Children will have their own resources, including pencils, rulers, glue stick, scissors etc. for use during the school day. Please do not send in equipment from home. Children must not bring school bags into school however they can bring their PE kit in a drawstring bag. Reading books will not be allowed home, but we will provide information on online platforms to access reading books. Books can be used within classes when in school and we will quarantine periodically to ensure they remain virus free. Please send your child with a water bottle that has a cap/lid, rather than the St Michael's water bottles.

School will keep a detailed log of pupils and staff in each group and any close contact that takes place between children and staff in different groups. If a child or staff member displays symptoms of the virus during the school day they will be isolated until additional medical assistance can be gained, this may be 111 support, an ambulance or until they leave the site with a parent to self-isolate. If someone who has attended school has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) we will contact the local health protection team who will guide the school through the actions we need to take. Based on this advice, anyone who has been in close contact with the person who has tested positive must go home and self-isolate for 14 days. They will need to be tested and evidence of a negative test needs to be seen by school before they are allowed to return.

I hope the measures outlined above will go some way to reassure you that the leadership team of St Michael's have carefully considered and risk assessed all eventualities. Do not hesitate to send any questions you may have via the office



at admin@st-michaels.newham.sch.uk and somebody will get back to you as soon as possible.

Dealing with anxiety/worry

We know that most children have been out of school since March, many are excited to return to school in order to get back into a routine, see their friends and teachers, as well as continue learning in the way that they are most familiar with. However, it is perfectly reasonable that some children may be anxious or worried about returning to school. As a school, we will be very mindful of the children's varying needs and have built in lots of time for children to talk about their lockdown experiences and concerns with their teacher or other trusted adults in the school. However, it is important that you begin to talk to your child about their return to school. Below are links to some useful resources from the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families to support your conversation with your child:

https://www.traumainformedschools.co.uk/images/preparing_your_child_for_the_return_to_school.jpg

<https://www.partnershipforchildren.org.uk/uploads/Files/PDFs/Resilience%20Activities/Going%20back%20to%20school.pdf>

<https://nipinthebud.org/information-films/tips-for-returning-to-school/>

<https://www.partnershipforchildren.org.uk/uploads/Files/PDFs/Resilience%20Activities/Letting%20Go%20and%20Future%20Plans.pdf>

Travelling to School

The latest advice from TfL is where possible please walk, cycle or scooter to school to help free up more space on public transport for others. As you know we have a bike shed and allocated spaces in the school to store bikes and scooters for the children. More travel advice information can be found at:

<https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/schools-and-young-people/travel-guidance-for-schools?cid=reopeningeducation>

Newham Test & Trace Mobile App

Those of you that are Newham residents will know that Newham has been asked to trail The new Covid-19 NHS Test & Trace mobile phone app. The app has been developed by leading NHS medical experts working alongside Google and Apple. As you know Newham has experienced some of the most significant effects of



coronavirus because of the health inequalities and vulnerabilities in the borough. That's why it's important that you download the app and help test it. You should have received letters, emails, or texts, with a unique quick response (QR) code to allow you to easily install the app on your SMART phone. Please don't ignore them. The more people that use the app the better we will be able to stop the spread of this virus.

We ask that any child/parent displaying symptoms of coronavirus should not enter the school premises. If you have indicated that you or your child have symptoms of coronavirus we will ask that you arrange for a test and share a negative result with us before your child returns to school.

Recovery/Catch up Curriculum

Many parents will be worried about how we will support their child to ensure that they do not fall behind as they have missed direct teaching for a term. In the first half term (until the October half term break) we will be teaching the key curriculum objectives that the children need to know from the previous year. So for instance the children in year 5 will focus on the key objectives for year 4 for the first half term so we can try to ensure that they know the key concepts from the previous year.

We realize that there are not quick fixes and children will need a lot of support as they return to the curriculum. I would also advise that parents have an additional routine at home of daily reading and basic Maths in order to help your child catch up. The school day is packed with learning from the time that your child enters their classroom. Unfortunately, we cannot squeeze anymore learning in so parents will have to play a larger role with their routines at home to support their child in catching up.

Finally, this year will be a challenging year as we try to fight the spread of this virus and return to some sort of normality. I am sure we will have many bumps along the way; however we will try our best to regularly communicate with you to ensure that you know what is happening. And we ask that parents regularly check and read the letters that we email. These are very challenging times and I think a little Christian kindness will go a long way as we will no doubt be frustrated about different things at different points. I know that this is said often, but we really are all in this together. We desperately want our children to return to



school and we want them to stay safe. We realize that school is the best place for children to support their growth and development. We will always put the safety and well-being of the children first and stand with all our parents in trying to make their child's return to school as smooth as possible. If you are concerned or unclear about anything at any point do not hesitate to send an email in the first instance, call the school telephone or talk to your child's class teacher or another adult within the school. I am more than happy to meet with parents, but of course your child's class teacher should always be the first point of contact.

I continue to pray that you and your family remain safe and secure in God's arms.

God Bless.

N. Scott
Executive Headteacher