



PRIMARY 1 RE-OPENING

PLANS

This guidance supersedes all previous correspondences from school.

Guidance correct at 18th August 2020

PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT ANY DECISIONS MADE WITHIN THIS DOCUMENT HAVE BEEN MADE AS A DIRECT RESULT OF DEPARTMENT GUIDANCE AND/OR TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF OUR ENTIRE SCHOOL COMMUNITY. THIS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE AND WILL BE REVIEWED ON AN ONGOING BASIS.

A warm welcome to our *New School Day*, information booklet. This material takes its name from the Department of Education in Northern Ireland's guidance that suggests both a new *unusual type* of school day is ahead of us all, while also offering hope that we are finally returning to a new *fresh start* type of school day allowing us to be the much loved learning community that is Victoria Primary School. We have missed you and your children all so much during the lockdown period. We are excited to be coming back together, whilst recognising that, to keep as many of us as safe as possible, we as a community still need to do important tasks, in our daily routine, a little more carefully and considerately to how we may have operated before March 2020.

In late August/September we intend to *all* return five days per week as our children will be together with their classmates and due to classroom sizes will most likely have minimal social distancing between children in the majority of normal everyday learning interactions. We have endeavoured throughout the summer to put in place: thorough cleaning schedules, good hygiene routines and when we return we will keep our class groupings, or *protective bubbles* apart as much as possible for the integrity of the restrictions and the good of our whole community. However, we cannot give cast iron guarantees that we will shield all our children and staff from the virus.

Children will be encouraged to maintain two metre social distancing from our staff, unless they are told by the adult that it's fine to be closer, for at least a short period of time. Staff may be wearing PPE depending on their activity and what needs to happen for a short period of time. We hope for life and learning to be as *normal* as possible in school while acknowledging to give as many of our community as safe a return as possible, we all do need to exercise caution to prevent our class units from having to be home schooled for even the shortest period of time, as part of any protective quarantine measure.

This information will be updated if we find operation procedures need to change as we are all learning how to operate through our *new school day* together. My promise to you is that we as a school will be the first to communicate with you if we believe there are any changes in our circumstances that will potentially impact on your individual child's protective bubble and equally we hope and trust that you our parents will feel that you too can communicate considerately and confidentially with us, in a timely manner for the good of all our children.

During lockdown, we as a school faced new challenges with home schooling/distance learning. I would like to take this opportunity to thank every member of our school community for their support during that time. It was new to us all. The staff here at school provided extremely detailed planning and activities for their classes on a weekly basis, differentiated for ability groupings. This was no easy task. Staff also allowed for parents to make contact with them via SLIDO to answer any specific questions in relation to home learning. This was a real success. I would like to thank parents for taking the time to communicate with staff in this manner. Hopefully, we will not see too

much more of distance learning taking place and school will remain open on a full time basis for as long as possible. That is why it is extremely important to take the time to read this booklet, speak to your child(ren) about social distancing, good hand, cough and sneeze hygiene etc, in order to keep everyone within our community as safe as possible.

It is important that I am open and honest with all parents / carers right from the start. We are not returning to what VPS looked like back in March. Our daily routines will be different, decisions have been made (that may not please everyone) in line with guidance given to school from the Department in order to keep everyone as safe as possible. As always, I am sure that you will all work with us as we try to manage our 'new normal'.

I would like to take this opportunity, in advance of school starting, to thank you for the co-operation required when your child(ren) start back to school.

Mr Fulton

- Children will attend school, in their coloured groups, on either a Monday and Tuesday **OR** Thursday and Friday for the first two weeks of term, starting on Monday 31st August 2020. Further information about school timetable after the first 2 weeks will be given to parents at the information evening on Tuesday 25th August at 7pm.
- Primary 1 children will enter and exit school via the Primary 1 entrance. (Members of staff will be on hand at the beginning and end of the school day to assist)
- **YELLOW GROUP** will attend school on Monday and Tuesday (9.15am – 11.45am)
GREEN GROUP will attend school on a Thursday and Friday (9.15am – 11.45am).
- If you have received a QR code for SeeSaw please ensure you have logged on. Our P1 teachers will be starting to send home welcome videos etc so it is important that you don't miss out.
- The information evening for P1 parents on Tuesday 25th August, 7pm-8pm, will still be going ahead. In order to distance within our school hall, please ensure that **children do not attend** and that only 1 adult from each family attends. **FACE COVERINGS MUST BE WORN.** More detailed information about starting times etc will be given at this meeting in relation to P1.
- Government guidelines are very clear – parents and visitors must not enter the school building as far as possible and it is important that parents / carers keep 2m apart from each other on the playground and do not congregate on or outside school grounds. Please make your way into the school grounds and leave as quickly as possible.
- **SCHOOL BAGS** – In a change from our previous guidance, children will be allowed to bring school bags into school. This will only be a means to allow us to send letters, homework etc home in a safe manner. **STAFF WILL, AS FAR AS POSSIBLE, NOT TOUCH A CHILD'S SCHOOL BAG.** School bags will not enter the classroom and will remain on your child's coat hook in our cloakrooms. Children can bring their school planner / homework diary to and from school in their school bag. Wipes will be made available in classes for children to wipe their planners / homework diaries when they come into school each morning.
- **LUNCH BOXES** – Previous guidance remains unchanged. Children should not bring lunch boxes into school. Children should bring their snack and lunch in a fully disposable bag. This bag will remain on their coat hook, in our cloakrooms, and will be placed in the bin at the end of lunchtime. I am very aware that this is not a very 'green' or environmentally friendly approach, however, I hope that parents will support school in this.
- **Coats** – as always, parents are asked to send their child(ren) into school with a coat. Coats will be placed in our school cloakrooms throughout the school day.
- **PE Kits** – Full PE kits should be sent into school with all children on the first day of term. When we feel it is appropriate to start wearing PE Kits for PE we will do so ASAP, however, at the beginning of term, children will most likely only change

into training shoes to complete their PE and as much PE as possible will take place outside.

- **School Planners / Homework Diary** – Staff have taken on board the extremely positive feedback received from parents in relation to our planners. School planners will be able to travel from school and home via your child's school bag. Teachers will not be handling pupil planners on a daily basis and will only do so in exceptional circumstances. As with last year, planners are £3.50 per child. Please send in £3.50, in a sealed envelope, with your child's name on it, on your child's first day of school to cover the cost of the planner. In order to reduce the touching of money as much as possible, no change will be given, so please send in correct money.
- **Water Bottles** – Water bottles may travel to and from school. They will remain in your child's classroom throughout the day. Please be advised that, due to hygiene issues, water bottles **cannot be refilled during the school day**.
- **School Lunches** – When P1 children are in school over lunch, school lunches can be ordered. Children entitled to free school meals will get a lunch on a daily basis. For parents paying for lunches, payment must be made on a Monday, for each day that week that your child is availing of a school lunch. Money must come into school in an envelope, labelled with your child's name **and the days that week your child is taking lunches. Please write this on the outside of the envelope**. Staff will not accept cash / cheques unless they come into school in an envelope. This is due to cash being left for 72 hours before being touched by office staff etc. Please send correct money into school for lunches as change will not be given.
- **School Snack** – We operate an optional snack system in school. The school canteen will provide your child with a healthy snack on a daily basis (eg toast / pancake and a small piece of fruit). Our snack service will begin on the week beginning 14th September for Primary 1 pupils and costs £3 per week. Payment must be made on a Monday. Money must come into school in an envelope, labelled with your child's name. Staff will not accept cash / cheques unless they come into school in an envelope. This is due to cash being left for 72 hours before being touched by office staff etc. Please send correct money into school for snack as change will not be given.
- **Parents / Carers entering the school building** - Our school buildings are closed to all visitors except our children, staff and essential visiting workers. Parents will be actively discouraged from entering the school buildings as a means of preventing spread of the virus. Instead we encourage communication by: telephone 02893351781, or email victoriaprimary@hotmail.co.uk . A *Drop Off Box* for forgotten items to be passed on to our children will be placed each day outside our main front door in the porch. **Please make sure all items are labelled with your child's name**. Just telephone or email our office to let us know there is something delivered. If you must visit the school office, a face covering **must** be

worn, and only 1 visitor will be allowed in our office space at one time. Please do not enter the main entrance if you can see another visitor at reception.

- **School Entrance / Car Park** – The school will operate a one way system for dropping off and collecting children. Parents and children should enter via the pedestrian gate on Coronation Road and follow the one way signs by exiting the school via the car park gate on Coronation Road. This will happen at the beginning and end of the school day. At all other times, when foot traffic is low, parents and carers may enter and exit via the pedestrian gate, allowing for social distancing if another visitor passes. **THE SCHOOL CAR PARK WILL NOT BE ACCESSIBLE FOR ANY PARENT / VISITOR AT THE BEGINNING OR END OF THE SCHOOL DAY.** This is due to the car park gate being used as the pedestrian exit. Please do not attempt to gain entry to the school car park. It is strictly for staff only.
- **Unwell Children** - It is vitally important that parents keep their children home from school when they are experiencing any symptom of the Coronavirus ie a new continuous cough, high temperature or loss of taste and smell. Children who are ill at all, should not be sent to school and they will be isolated and sent home immediately if they are found to be ill or become ill during the school day to give our staff and parents confidence that our school is a safe and healthy place to learn and work, especially during current restrictions. We may appear fussier about this than normal, especially for working parents, but we ask for your patience and understanding in advance.
- **Good Hygiene** - Our children and staff are encouraged to wash their hands for the recommended twenty seconds (easy way to measure: sing *Happy Birthday* twice), before leaving home, on entry into class, and at regular intervals throughout the day (including, but not limited to, eating/drinking, using the toilet). Paper towels will be provided in classes and our toilets have hand driers to ensure adequate drying of hands to prevent infection. Parents should encourage our children to use them. Handwashing posters are on all toilet doors and on all classroom doors to act as a reminder. Hand sanitiser will be available at all main entrance doors and hand wash will be available in all classrooms and everyone is encouraged to use it as they pass. Depending on the age of our children parents can send our children in with their own hand sanitiser / wipes if they wish. Please ensure that this sanitiser is appropriate for any sensitivities your child may have. Disposable tissues are available in each room for both staff and children to use although please send your child in with their own packet of tissues. Children and staff should sneeze/cough into tissues (never into hands), adhering to the '*Catch it, bin it, kill it*' guidance. Used tissues should be put into the bin immediately after use and children should wash their hands afterwards. Children will be reminded not to touch their face (eyes, mouth, nose) with hands that are not clean. Please remind your child(ren) of this at home.

- **PPE** - PPE is available in school for staff to use when administering first aid or dealing with an unwell child. Our children are not required to wear PPE to school or when in school. School will remain well stocked with liquid anti-bacterial soap, sanitising wipes, anti-bacterial spray, paper towels, toilet roll, tissues, and other PPE equipment. Staff and children may wear face coverings during school if they wish. This is down to individual parent / staff preference, however, as mentioned, it is not required. Parents should be aware that, if your child(ren) wear face coverings, staff will not monitor this. It is up to parents / carers to talk to children at home about their expectation of children wearing face coverings.
- **BREAKFAST CLUB** – We intend to offer a reduced breakfast club provision from Monday 24th August (for P7 pupils) and from Monday 31st August for all other pupils. In line with social distancing measures, and in order to keep children within their family groupings, we must follow the measures outlined below. If you do not feel that the measures outlined below would be appropriate for your child, please **do not send them to breakfast club**.

Breakfast Club – How Will It Work?

1. Booking is ESSENTIAL. We are limited to only taking 24 bookings, due to distancing requirements. Booking will open on a Thursday morning at 10am. Please e-mail victoriaprimary@hotmail.co.uk on a **Thursday morning**, from 10am for the following week, detailing your child(ren)'s name(s) and the mornings that they will be attending the following week. **Please be advised that any e-mail that arrives before 10am on a Thursday morning will be ignored.** Once processed by a member of staff, you will receive an e-mail confirming if your child(ren) can attend breakfast club.
2. Payment for breakfast club should be sent in, on the first day each week that your child(ren) attends. This should be payment in full for the total number of days that week. Breakfast club costs £2 per day, per child. Money must come into school in an envelope, labelled with your child's name. Staff will not accept cash / cheques unless they come into school in an envelope. This is due to cash being left for 72 hours before being touched by office staff etc. Please send correct money into school for breakfast club as change will not be given.
3. As per government guidelines, parents should not enter the school building. A member of staff will meet you and your child at the entrance door. Staff will assist and direct your child to their seat. Parents are asked not to come into the building. (This is not our normal approach....just while we are dealing with Covid-19)
4. Children will sit, at a table, in sibling groups. If a child attends by themselves, we will endeavour to have them sit at the opposite end of a table from others, however, they will be unable to sit close to other children. I am aware that this may cause some concern for some children / parents, however, we must keep children apart from other as much as possible.

- **Kids' Cave** – at the time this booklet went to parents, a final decision has not been made about Kids' Cave re-opening. So, at the moment, please make alternative childcare arrangements for after school care.
- **What if...**

Procedure if a child displays symptoms of Covid-19 in school:

- School will contact parent/carer.
- An adult will supervise the child who will be isolated from others and taken to a well-ventilated area.
- Any staff member staying with the child will continue to look after them safely until their parent comes to collect them.
- If you are asked to collect your child due to symptoms of COVID 19 developing you will collect them from the main entrance.
- The child (if aged over 5) will go for a test ASAP. Tests can be booked online at: <https://covid-19.hscni.net/testing/>
- The children within that group will continue to attend school as their bubble until the outcome of the individual's test result.
- Where the child tests negative, they can return to their class and end their self-isolation **48 hours after their symptoms have gone.**
- Where the child tests positive, the rest of their class including the class teacher and assistants will be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days.

Wow....that was a lot of information! It pains me to send out such a lengthy document full of rules and regulations, however, I'm sure you will agree that it is important for us all to be fully aware of the expectations right from the start.

If you have any questions about our restart, please continue to use SLIDO and the event code VictoriaFAQ up until your child starts school. Once your child starts school please use the event code relevant to your child's year group:

Nursery – VictoriaNursery

Primary 1 – VictoriaP1

Primary 2 – VictoriaP2

Primary 3 – VictoriaP3

Primary 4 – VictoriaP4

Primary 5 – VictoriaP5

Primary 6 – VictoriaP6

Primary 7 – VictoriaP7