

St David's R.C. Primary and ELC Setting

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Midlothian 

16th August 2021

Dear Parent/ Carer,

Safe return of pupils Wednesday 18th August

We are very much looking forward to welcoming learners back to St David's and wish to maintain a safe and smooth return for all pupils and staff.

The health and safety of our pupils, staff and wider community is paramount and we will continue to work hard to review and improve our practices and procedures inline with local and national guidance. Guidance continues to be updated regularly and we continue to work to understand and respond to the ever-changing guidance and protocols. Following on from the letter from Fiona Robertson, our Executive Director, I can now confirm the below arrangements for the beginning of the new term.

Please read the information below carefully. We ask that everybody acts with care and consideration. Please be vigilant and follow the expectations we set out to keep all users of our school safe and to help minimise the spread of infection.

Access to school grounds

To minimise the amount of time spent in the school grounds, the school gate will be closed until 8.40am each morning. We ask that parents/ carers do not arrive before this time to avoid crowds or large gatherings. Please do not congregate at the gate, in the parking area or within the playground. Please respect the physical distancing measures still in place for adults i.e. at least 1 metre from one another – this includes when speaking to other parents when waiting to collect your child/ren.

When arriving at school:

- only one parent/ carer can pick/ up drop off each child where possible
- parents/ carers are not permitted to enter the school building
- please enter through the playground gate (front or rear)
- your child should assemble at their class entrance (please see layout below) maintaining at least 1m distance from staff
- parents/ carers must stay back from the class lines
- parents/ carers are asked to ensure drop off and pick up is swift to minimise the number of users in the school grounds at any one time
- parents/ carers are asked to wear face masks (unless there is a medical exemption) throughout their time in the school grounds

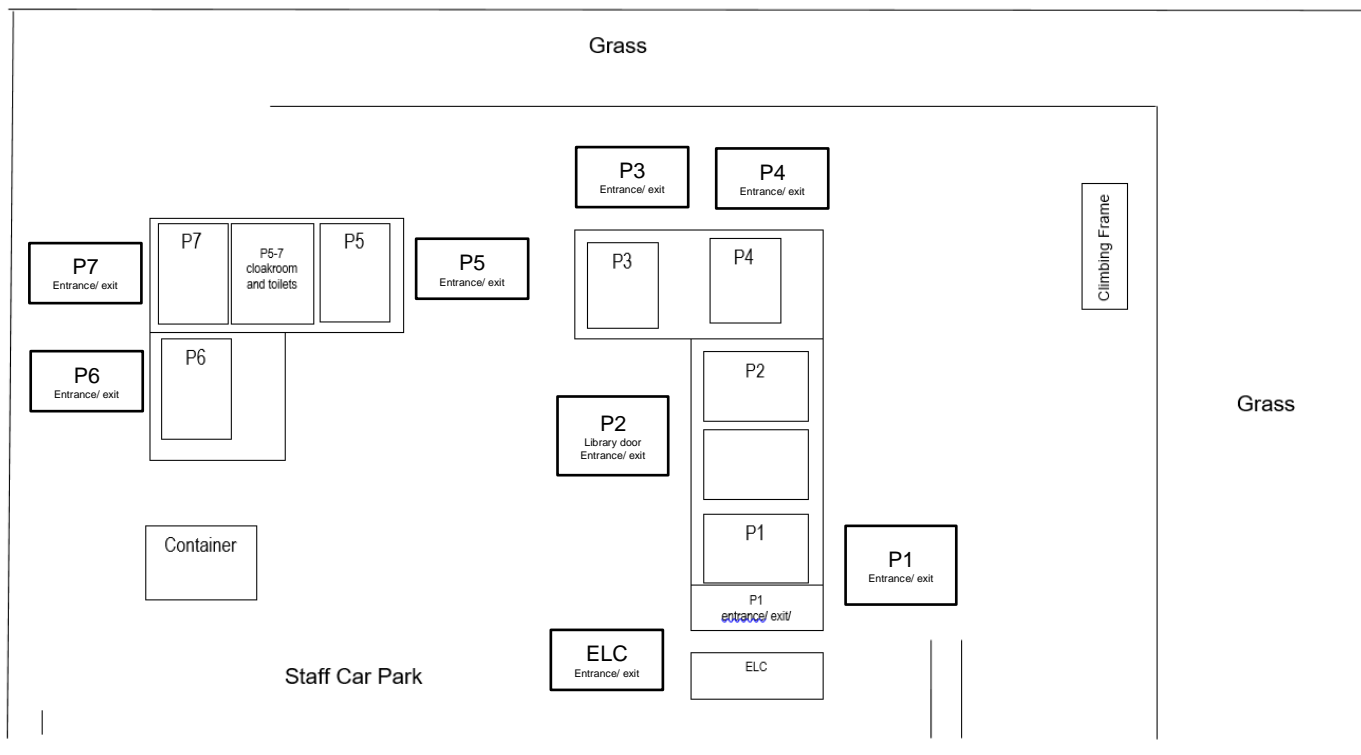
Please ensure you wash your hands prior to setting off for school.

Strictly no loitering in the playground – parents/ carers should collect and leave the school grounds promptly. A separate communication will follow with the **very clear expectations about parking outside the school. Please read this carefully**



and ensure you are familiar with the revised parking system. Please be considerate and courteous in your parking choices.

Note: Works were scheduled to be carried out over the summer break to improve security measures in the school grounds. Unfortunately this is yet to be completed. We anticipate new fencing to be erected at the side of the school (by car park and kitchen entrance) and at the playground entrance. I will provide further information as and when I receive updates from contractors.



Visitors to school

As part of our infection control measures, **parents/ carers are not permitted access to the school building. Please do not go the school office.** Instead, please telephone or email us with any enquiries. We appreciate that this is very different to our usual procedures but is a necessary measure to keep everybody safe.

A small number of visitors are permitted to access the school building e.g. health professionals and council workers however, these continue to be kept to an absolute minimum and are coordinated out with school hours where possible.

At present face-to-face meetings are not possible however, we are happy to speak through any concerns or queries by telephone. Please do not approach teachers/ staff members to raise issues.

After School Club collection

A number of services currently provide wrap around care for families at St David's. Drop off arrangements remain the same with a member of staff escorting pupils to an After School Club staff member out with the school building at the end of the school day. After School Club staff are not permitted to congregate at the school office or gain entrance to the building.

School transport

A small number of pupils are transported to school by school bus or taxi. Information is communicated by Midlothian Council to individual families detailing arrangements. Pupils must sanitise after leaving school transport.



Transport to school

Where possible, families are encouraged to walk to school. Families should continue to follow Scottish Government guidance in relation to travelling safely, particularly on public transport.

Late arrival/ early collection

There are some occasions when a child/ren arrive late to school. Please go to the school office and ring the buzzer. Please stand back from the door. A member of staff will provide entry for your child.

Should your child require early collection, please telephone in advance to allow the school to have your child prepared.

Parents/ carers are not permitted into the school building whilst they wait.

Primary 1

We are eager to meet our new Primary 1 cohort! Primary 1 will attend school Wednesday 18th, Thursday 19th and Friday 20th 8.50am-12pm.

All Primary 1 pupils will join us full time from Monday 23rd August, 8.50am to 3.15pm.

We look forward to putting faces to names and to working in partnership with our new families.

Separate information will follow for P1 families about what to expect at drop off and pick up.

What to bring

P5-7 pupils require a **packed lunch from home** upon their return to school. Families in receipt of Free School Meals continue to receive direct payments to allow packed lunches to be purchased and brought from home. We will advise you of when this arrangement changes.

P4 learners are now entitled to **free school meals**.

P1-3 will continue to be offered a school lunch or can bring a packed lunch from home.

All pupils will **eat lunches in classrooms** as the dining hall remains out of use. We anticipate that this will change over the coming weeks as the arrangements for dining halls becomes clearer.

Pupils should **bring a water bottle** to school each day. We will advise you of **milk** arrangements when we have full information from Midlothian Council.

Pupils do not need to change their shoes in school at present and therefore **do not require indoor shoes**. We will inform you when this arrangement changes.

Please **do not send a PE kit into school at this time**. PE indoors is not currently permitted. We will inform you when this arrangement changes.

Pupils will be **provided with the resources they require** in school. Individual packs are provided for each child including key items e.g. scissors, pencils. These items are regularly cleaned and replenished. Please do not send additional items from home.

Strictly **no toys or personal items** should be brought into school.

Please **ensure all items are clearly labelled** with your child's name and class.



Pupils can bring their own moisturiser to apply (we recognise many pupils have sensitive skin from continual handwashing and sanitising). This must be clearly labelled and stored in school bags.

All items will be kept in your child's **school bag**. School bags will be kept on the floor and are not permitted to go on desks. **Primary 1 children will be gifted a book bag** in their first week. Please use this instead of a backpack as we have very limited space within the classroom to store items. **Primary 2 should continue to use their book bag for school each day.** Teachers have found it considerably easier to store and manage book bags instead of bulky backpacks in the classroom.

Coats and bags will be stored in classrooms (cloakrooms remain out of use with the exception of P1).

All items should return home with your child each day.

Please note it will not be possible to enter the classroom at the end of the day to check for lost or missing items.

Uniform

Where possible, we ask that pupils wear school uniform. There is no requirement to wear a tie or blazer at present. Information about how and where to purchase uniform can be found on our website.

Your child will be given an allocated day for PE outdoors (weather dependent). **We ask that your child comes dressed for physical activity** (no football shirts or colours) as children will not be able to change for PE in school at present. PE kit may include: a waterproof jacket, suitable trainers, a t-shirt, jumper and jogging bottoms. **PE days are as follows commencing Monday 23rd August:**

Monday	P2	
Tuesday	P5	P6
Wednesday	P3	P4
Thursday	P7	
Friday	P1	

A number of families have requested **school ties (£5) and iron on badges**. Ties are available through the school office. A request sheet will be available from the playground in the first week back. Please note that admin staff will not handle cash at this time and all payments must be made through ParentPay. Payment will go live on ParentPay in the new session. Please do not go to the school office in person to purchase one. Items will be put in your child's school bag. Iron on badges previously purchased by the Parent Council have now sold out. We will seek to source similar badges in the new session as these have proved very popular.

PPE

Some pupils may wish to wear facemasks in school.

Staff will continue to wear PPE inline with local and national guidance. This may include facemasks, visors, gloves and aprons, particularly when administering first aid or supporting with a healthcare need.

Staff will work with pupils to understand the need to wear this equipment to keep everyone safe.

Before and after school activities



At present there are no school activities offered due to current government guidance e.g. Active Schools clubs. We will update you when these services resume.

Unfortunately we are unable to offer our Breakfast Club provision at this time. We realise this is a valuable service for many but are unable to offer the service due to restrictions around large gatherings and the enhanced cleaning regimes required. This decision is reviewed regularly and we will look to resume this service if possible.

ELC

New ELC Learners will have received confirmation of their 1140 hour place prior to the summer holidays. The ELC staff team will make contact with families ahead of new children starting in the new term. Our ELC Setting will be at full capacity with 40 full time three and four year olds.

We look forward to welcoming our ELC returners on Wednesday 18th August. ELC bubbles are no longer a requirement and the children will therefore have full use of the playroom and garden once again. ELC learners will therefore be able to access setting through the ELC main entrance (by the staff car park) instead of at the ELC fire exit and garden gate. The staff team will support children with this transition and confirm arrangements with families over the coming days.

The school day

We will continue to work hard with all pupils to establish routines, structures and familiarity with the school environment following the summer break. This takes time and staff are sensitive and responsive to the varying experiences our pupils have had over the course of the pandemic. A focus on health and wellbeing continues to feature highly in the children's daily curriculum. Our Primary 6 and Primary 7 cohorts will benefit from additional planned activities to support their transition from composite classes back to year stages.

Pupils for the majority of their day remain in class cohorts. This remains the case throughout the school day with the exception of breaks and lunches. The children will be share playgrounds as follows: P1/P2, P3/4 and P5-7. Although pupils do not need to physically distance from one another, they must remain 2 metres from adults wherever possible.

Younger pupils will continue to benefit from active, practical tasks however enhanced cleaning regimes and regular sanitising of equipment will be in place.

Pupils will regularly be asked to sanitise/ wash their hands for at least 20 seconds to maintain good hygiene throughout the school day. Sanitising stations are set up throughout the school and additional measures continue to be in place for an enhanced cleaning regime. Facilities Management staff remain onsite full time.

Pupils will not be permitted to move around the school building and will continue to spend the majority of their time in their classroom. This includes when eating snack and lunch before going out to play. We anticipate that these arrangements may change over the coming weeks as procedures are reviewed and eased.

Support for Learning/ specialists

Class cohorts and individuals continue to benefit from additional support from the Support for Learning team including Learning Assistants. The team work tirelessly to plan high quality interventions and will be on hand to assist and support learners across the school.

Miss Goodwin will continue to work with identified classes teaching art.

Staffing updates

I can confirm a number of further staffing updates following the summer break.



Miss Elden leaves us to take up a new post at Fife College. Miss Harper also moves on to a new role within another ELC setting. We thank them both for their service and wish them the very best in their new career paths. We're very privileged to have been a part of their journey.

We welcome Miss Pringle, Mr Bradley and Mrs Szymanska to the ELC team.

Two further Learning Assistant posts are currently being advertised. One of these posts releases Miss Resta to focus on PEF interventions and the other will be funded from the Scottish Government Recovery Fund.

Transition

Staff are working hard to coordinate a smooth transition for pupils into their new class cohorts. They will work hard to build positive, reciprocal relationships with the children in their class and offer a range of learning experiences to promote and stimulate their learning. It is our intention to include families in these transitions, where possible, albeit it remotely.

Helping your child back to school

A number of families have benefited from additional transition opportunities over the holidays whilst other pupils are benefiting from visual prompts and social stories to help them prepare for their return.

You can continue to support your child by reassuring and talking to them about returning to school. If you have any concerns or updates you wish to provide, please contact the school office in the first instance.

We will continue to post updates on Seesaw and our Twitter feed. Please continue to engage in discussion with your child about their learning.

Thank you for your continued support as we work hard to ensure a safe, successful and focused return to learning.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs Gill McPherson
Head Teacher

