

4th September 2020

Frequently Asked Questions

These FAQs are designed to support parents in the initial return to school in September 2020. The government guidance was updated on Friday 28th August 2020. The school has updated its risk assessment, however many organisational aspects have not changed. We have highlighted any changes or new information to make it easier for you.

We return to school on Tuesday 8th September, please do not worry about being in the right place at the right time for the initial return, lots of staff members will be on hand to help all parents and children get back into the school routine. We are delighted to welcome our children back to school.

Drop off and Collection Information

Which year groups are returning to school?

KS1 and KS2 children will all return to school on **Tuesday 8th September**. Children in Early Years have all received a separate letter to inform them of their child's start date.

What are the arrangements for the staggered start and end of the school day?

Year Group	Name	Room	Teacher	Start	End	Entrance
Early Years	Seedlings (F1)	EYFS Room	Mrs Golding	8.45 – 9am	11.45am	Main entrance gate EYFS end door
	Acorn (F2)	Acorn	Mrs Saxton	8.45 – 9am	3 – 3.15pm	Playground gate Acorn door
Year 1/2	Ash	Ash	Miss Dunbar	8.45 – 9am	3 – 3.15pm	Playground gate KS1 entrance
	Maple	Maple	Mr Shires			
Year 3/4	Beech	Beech	Miss Fisher	8.30 - 8.45am	3.15 - 3.30pm	Playground gate KS2 entrance
	Chestnut	Chestnut	Mrs Snow			
	Willow	Willow	Mrs Carr			
Year 5/6	Sycamore	Sycamore	Mrs Boldy	8.30 - 8.45am	3.15 - 3.30pm	Main entrance gate Sycamore door
	Oak	Oak	Mrs Osborne			Main entrance gate Oak door

We have created 'windows' of opening/closing so that parents can arrive within that 15 minute window, hopefully causing less congestion on the journey into school. Parents with children in separate bubbles can arrive in between the bubble opening times - this will give chance to take children to separate entrances if needed.

For example, if you have a child in Y1 (window of 8.45 - 9.00am) and another child in Y4 (window of 8.30 - 8.45am) please arrive at 8.40am to drop the first child off in Y4 and then walk around to the Y1 classroom to drop them off for 8.45am).

In the first week, staff will be on-hand outside to help you line up with your children in the right place, at the right time.

Lines will be clearly marked out on the playground/around the building to show where classes will need to line up at their allocated times.

Parents of children in EYFS, KS1 and Lower KS2 will be expected to wait with their child/children until the class teacher meets them for morning drop-off and collect them from the assigned area for evening pick-up. Y5/6 parents are welcome to wait with their child, however the older children are allowed to wait unattended on the lines and meet parents as they usually would at the end of the school day. Y5/6 children are able to walk to/from school without a parent accompanying them (providing their behaviour is good and they maintain appropriate social distancing).

Only one parent or carer should accompany the child to school to minimise risk.

Parents will not be invited to enter the building but will drop off as described above. Schools have no power under the law to enforce social distancing with parents other than to make that request. We strongly urge you to follow social distancing; if parents break social distancing on their journey to school, it makes all of the school's effort to keep children safe worthless. **Parents can wear face coverings in the school grounds when they drop off/collect their children, if they wish to. It is not an expectation.**

What happens if I am late for my allocated drop off time?

If you arrive at school after 9.15am we ask that you go to the main entrance gate and walk up to the office. The playground gate will be locked at 9.15am. Please use the buzzer to contact the office staff and wait outside - staff will then ensure your children are then taken to the correct classroom. We urge parents to arrive on time.

What happens if I am late for my allocated collection?

As children are not able to enter different areas in school, children will have to wait outside to await collection. As normal, we ask you to inform the office if you are expected to be late.

Attendance and Behaviour

Does my child have to attend?

The government has made it clear that they expect all children to attend school from September. From September, the usual rules on school attendance will apply, meaning it is parents' responsibility to ensure that their child attends school. It is schools' responsibility to record attendance daily and follow up on any absences. From September, school will be able to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' codes of conduct. Where children are not able to attend school as parents are following clinical and/or public health advice, absence will not be penalised. However, as always, the school will consider the context of absences and work with parents. This has always been the policy at St Helen's.

Has the Behaviour Policy changed?

The behaviour policy has been updated in line with new guidance emphasising the importance of children following stricter hygiene measures. The policies overarching aims and principles remain the same and the school will do its best to support children in achieving its aims. The school does continue to have the same disciplinary powers including permanent exclusion for any child that repeatedly breaks rules as a last resort.

What if my child is shielding or self-isolating?

The majority of pupils will be able to return to school. However, a small number of pupils will still be unable to attend in line with public health advice due to self-isolating and shielding.

Shielding advice for all adults and children paused on the 1st August, due to a continued decline in the rates of community transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). This means that even the small number of pupils who will remain on the shielded patient list can also return to school, as can those who have family members who are shielding. We suggest reading the current advice to parents.

Some pupils no longer required to shield but who generally remain under the care of a specialist health professional may need to discuss their care with their health professional before returning to school (usually at their next planned clinical appointment). Advice from the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health at [COVID-19 - 'shielding' guidance for children and young people](https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/resources/covid-19-shielding-guidance-children-youngpeople#children-who-should-be-advised-to-shield) <https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/resources/covid-19-shielding-guidance-children-youngpeople#children-who-should-be-advised-to-shield>

The School Day

How children will be grouped?

In the government guidance for the autumn term, maintaining consistent groups remains important, but given the decrease in the prevalence of coronavirus (COVID-19) and the resumption of the full range of curriculum subjects, schools may need to change the emphasis on bubbles within their system of controls and increase the size of these groups.

At St Helen's we will have small Key Stage bubbles:

Early Years	Seedlings (F1)
	Acorn (F2)
Year 1/2	Ash
	Maple
Year 3/4	Beech
	Chestnut
	Willow
Year 5/6	Sycamore
	Oak

Will children be required to wear their school uniform?

Yes. **Children will wear school uniform from September.** Uniforms do not need to be cleaned any more often than usual, nor do they need to be cleaned using methods which are different from normal. This is a change to current advice.

In a change to normal uniform requirements we will be asking children to wear their outdoor PE Kit to school one day per week. This day will be communicated to parents by class teachers on Dojo. This is so that children do not need to bring a bag to school or get changed within the classroom. **Our outdoor PE kit is: white t-shirt, plain black track suit bottoms or plain black leggings for girls with a plain black sweatshirt or zipped sweatshirt and trainers.**

What can my child bring to school?

It is still recommended by the government that pupils limit the amount of equipment they bring into school each day, to essentials.

- Children may bring a lunchbox carried by hand (not a rucksack/school bag)
- A coat, hat and scarf
- Suncream (weather dependent)
- Water bottle

Children will need to bring a water bottle from home each day. It should be taken home each day and cleaned and re-filled ready for the next day. There will be water available in each classroom throughout the day to top water up.

- School bags are **not** allowed to reduce congestion in classrooms and cloakrooms.
- At the moment please **do not** to send in book bags - this may be reviewed later in the term.
- We ask that toys, personal belongings or personal items are not brought to school

What are the arrangements for Lunchtime?

All children who chose to have a school dinner with us will have their hot meal plated and served in their classrooms supported by our lunchtime supervisors. All UFS and KS1 children are entitled to a meal free of charge under the Universal Free School Meal Programme. We strongly advise that this offer is taken up. This will mitigate the need to store individual lunches on/under a child's table in the classroom. Children who bring in a packed lunch will also eat in their classrooms.

We have maintained the number of lunchtime supervisors that we employ to enable this system to work. We will adjust these arrangements as required in school and hope to move towards a full lunch service in the hall once we are able to.

Will children stay in the same classroom environment most of the day?

Yes, children will stay in their own classroom throughout the day except for break times. Outdoor play will be in sectioned independent play areas. Children will play within their own bubbles and not mix with children from other bubbles.

Some specialist teaching such as phonic groups in EYFS and KS1 will involve using shared areas. These areas will have additional cleaning.

Children will not leave their classroom except for the following reasons:

- To go to their designated toilet
- To go to their designated area of the playground
- For teaching of phonics or interventions
- Medical issues
- PE lessons (outside)
- Fire safety drills
- In-house evacuation or lockdown

All movements in school will be supervised by staff members. There are no exceptions to this.

Can teachers move between bubbles?

Government guidance states *'all teachers and other staff can operate across different classes and year groups in order to facilitate the delivery of the school timetable.'* This is necessary at school for the carrying out of PPA cover, lunchtime supervision and specialist teaching.

Where staff need to move between classes and year groups, they should try and keep their distance from pupils and other staff as much as they can, ideally 2 metres from other adults. Government guidance states *'Again, we recognise this is not likely to be possible with younger children and teachers in primary schools can still work across groups if that is needed to enable a full educational offer.'*

Can specialist staff for children with SEND visit school?

Yes. Specialists, therapists, clinicians and other support staff for pupils with SEND will provide interventions as usual. They will mitigate the transmission of the virus by following the core principles of health and hygiene practices. Visitors to school to work with children will be required to follow safety protocols and will be informed of these procedures before arrival where possible, or on arrival as needed.

Hygiene Control

What hygiene measures will be in place to prevent transmission?

We will:

- Use the COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings guidance to inform our school specific risk assessments.
- Ensure that sufficient handwashing facilities are available. All classrooms have sink access and hand sanitiser will be available in areas without direct access to soap and water.
- Clean surfaces that children and staff touch, such as teaching resources, desks, chairs, doors, sinks, toilets, light switches, more regularly than normal.
- Provide lidded bins across school for tissues and ensure they are emptied throughout the day.
- Where possible, ensure spaces are well ventilated.
- Prop doors open, where safe to do so (bearing in mind fire safety and safeguarding), to limit use of door handles and aid ventilation.
- Increase cleaning regimes throughout the school day rather than just at the end of the school day.

We will ensure that all adults and children:

- Frequently wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds and dry thoroughly.
- Clean their hands on arrival at the setting, before and after eating, and after sneezing or coughing as well as before they leave.
- Are encouraged not to touch their mouth, eyes and nose.
- Use a tissue or elbow to cough or sneeze and use bins for tissue waste ('catch it, bin it, kill it').
- Ensure that help is available for children and young people who have trouble cleaning their hands independently.

Will face coverings be worn in school?

The government is not recommending universal use of face coverings in all schools. Primary school children will not need to wear a face covering. In adult communal areas, such as staff rooms, staff and visitors will be allowed to wear face coverings if they so wish. Face coverings will not be worn as a matter of course. The headteacher reserves the right to make this mandatory if the Government changes their stance on this in the future. Parents may wear face covering when bringing/collecting children from school. Staff who are involved in intimate care procedures will wear OOE face coverings and other protective items.

Curriculum and Well-being

My child is feeling anxious about coming back to school, how can I prepare him/her?

You will need to prepare your child by talking about what school was like and what it will be like now. It will be different in many ways, however children easily adapt and will enjoy being back in the routines of school. Sharing social stories can be really helpful for young children and help to express the situation in a clear factual way. These can be widely found on-line. The children who attended school during lockdown coped brilliantly in school - they really showed us how resilient and adaptable children can be!

However, if your child does not settle on returning, as always speak to your class teacher. We will work together to support every child feel comfortable and ready to learn again.

What will happen to home learning if the school goes into full or partial lockdown?

Mr Baird, Head of School and Curriculum Leader, is currently investigating how the school can offer a home learning curriculum that closely matches the school curriculum. The government asks schools for this to be in place by the end of September 2020. We are also looking into expanding the use of Class Dojo, or using Google Classroom so that every pupil in school can access live or recorded home learning.

Part of this process may involve carrying out a survey with parents to assess which children do/do not have access to an electronic device and/or the internet. School will follow the guidance to support these families.

Will extra-curricular clubs run?

No. Contact sports are not allowed under government guidance. We are also unable to mix bubbles of children.

I have read that there are particular risks in the teaching of music is that true?

We are awaiting further guidance on this. We will communicate with families about our music offer later on in the autumn term. We are also consulting with Wakefield Music Service about individual music lessons.

Will swimming for Year 4 pupils take place?

Swimming lessons will not take place during the first half of the autumn term. We will then review our swimming offer and the risk assessments needed. We will update parents when we have further information.

How can I speak to the class teacher?

You can contact your child's class teacher by messaging them on Dojo or telephoning the office who will then pass the message on. As the class teacher has to oversee their class all day, it may be later on in the day that they are able to see/respond to your message.

My child has Special Education Needs, what support will they have to return to school?

Some pupils with SEND will need specific help and preparation for the changes to routine. Our SENCO, Mrs Saxton, will plan to meet specific needs and will speak to parents who have a child with an EHCP. Individual arrangements are in place as required.

How will the school reduce the risk of transmission of the virus through use of frequently used equipment?

For individual and very frequently used equipment (such as pencils and pens) staff and pupils will have their own items that are not shared. Pupils will each have a pack of equipment provided by the school. This will remain on each pupil's desk. It will not be taken home.

Classroom based resources, such as books and games, can be used and shared within the bubble; these should be cleaned regularly, along with all frequently touched surfaces.

Resources that are shared between classes or bubbles, such as sports, art and science equipment should be cleaned frequently and meticulously and always between bubbles, or rotated to allow them to be left unused and out of reach for a period of 48 hours (72 hours for plastics) between use by different bubbles.

Coats are to be placed on the back of chairs to avoid crowding in the small cloak rooms.

Will volunteers be able to support in school?

Not at this time. The school is required to mitigate the transmission of the virus. The least number of contacts in the school will mitigate this.

Will school trips take place in the autumn term?

Off-site educational visits will not be a priority in the autumn term. The SLT await further guidance on the resumption of day visits and residential travel in the spring/summer terms of 2021.

Wraparound Offer

Will breakfast club be open?

Yes. In the first instance, we will be able to accommodate pre-booked sessions. Once routines and numbers are established, we hope to be able to open the facility to ad-hoc bookings to support our families as much as possible. A cap will need to be placed on numbers due to space limitations and the need to keep bubbles as separate.

The government guidance states ‘that some schools may keep children in their class groups for the majority of the classroom time, but also allow mixing into wider groups for specialist teaching, wraparound care and transport’. This accurately reflects the organisation at St Helen’s.

At breakfast club the children will sit in their bubble groups.

The provision will now be in the dining hall for the foreseeable future to allow for more space, enabling greater social distancing. Parents can access the hall as you would for class assemblies. Please ring the buzzer on the main entrance door and wait for a member of staff. Parents will not be allowed into this area of school.

The same hygiene measure that are implemented during the normal school day, (e.g. washing hands etc.) will be a prominent feature also at our breakfast club.

Will the school office be open?

Yes. Parents are asked to telephone or send a Dojo message to the school instead of presenting in person. If you receive a missed call from school please call us back so we can communicate any messages to you.

How to I leave emergency / prescribed medication with school

We are aware that some children require emergency medication to remain in school on a termly/annual basis. This should be handed to the class teacher on the first day of term, placed into a disposable bag with child’s name on. Prescription medication that is taken daily should also be given to the class teacher with the child’s name on. Inhalers should be labelled with the child’s name and handed in to school in the same way.