

TODDINGTON ST. GEORGE CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL

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'Lighting a spark in every child'.

Dear Parents and Carers,

Reassuring your child about coming back to school

We are really excited about the prospect of the children returning to Toddington St George in September but fully recognise that some children may have worries or concerns about returning to school.

We have all gone through a period of significant change and at this time of year children normally experience change without the complications of the Covid 19 situation. There are some changes you will be aware of already about how school will run next term at Toddington St Georges regarding social distancing and new routines (attached at the end of this note).

The staff are fully committed to making the transition from home learning to school learning as smooth as possible.

So in order for us to support you and your child we have included some additional resources and information that can be freely downloaded.

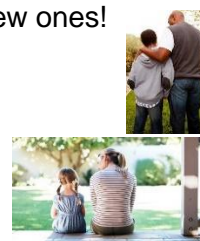
Some Parents/Carers may choose to use the resources but others may think that they may not be suitable, please be assured it is up to the parent/carer to use their discretion of what will and won't work with your child.

Talking through excitement, worries or fears

Quiet, calm chat times. In the run up to returning to school please **make time for quiet, calm conversations** about how your child is feeling about going back to school. Please be careful how you do this! The aim is to see if they have any concerns – not to instil new ones!

We fully anticipate that some children

- may not be worried at all and can't wait to see their friends
- some may be worried about a new class or teacher/routines etc.
- others may be very anxious about a return to school and or the virus



If your child does have any worries, please do acknowledge their concerns first before offering reassurance. You may want to use some of these resources to help

Resources and examples of things that can be said to help are;

1.Sharing a book about the virus



Share the Alex Schaeffer book (attached) and listen to any questions your child may have

2.Visual poster and booklet about staying safe (attached)



It's normal to feel worried about the virus, but here is what you can do to stay safe at school (and then **share the poster with your child** or **read through the booklet** with them if that helps). You can make your own version with your child's photo in and a drawing of what they think their teacher looks like (or look on the website and spot them).



3. Hopes activity

- Let's think about what you are hoping things be like so your teacher can see what you are hoping for next year (and then share the **Hopes poster** with your child to fill in)
- This could be shared with the teacher if your child wishes

4.Chat spaces

Your child can ALWAYS ask a grown up or a friend in school if they aren't sure about something so they can be helped to feel sure.



There are 2 new spaces for chats in school

- one is outside in Ellie's garden
- the other is inside the chat and chill rainbow room which is near the hall.

Children can go there to talk things through with a grown-up they name and a friend if they need. They can see photos of these spaces on the website very soon.



5.Ask it basket

If they don't want to say their question out loud they can put it in an '**Ask it basket**' which will be in the classroom with pens and post its so the teacher can read it and answer it for them. They don't need to write their name on their question.



7. 'Phone a friend' Ask someone who has been in school

Remind your child that some children and teachers have been in school since March and they were all safe and well then and the teachers will do all they can to keep it like that in school.

Some children will feel worried about having a new teacher too. That's why your new teacher and teaching assistants will spend lots of time explaining how everything will work and will want you to feel certain about everything. Remind your child the teacher will explain where the toilets are, where their peg for their coat/PE kit is, where they put their things, where they will be playing etc.

For yourself. You may want to look at a new guidance website from the Government may also be helpful <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/coronavirus/returning-school-after-lockdown/tips-parents-carers-return-to-school>.

We are all in this together and we can support one another by listening and talking to one another about any worries or concerns.

Staff leading on supporting children at this time are

- Mrs Stringer
- Ms Herbert
- Mrs Mallett

We hope this is helpful for your child and for you too,

Jane Spencer, Head teacher

For reference summary of changes in school re :

Social distancing

- *Wherever possible we will try and encourage children to be socially distant from each other. This will mean they do not get to sit as closely to their friends when doing their learning or eating their lunch but will still be with them*
- *Your child's year group bubbles will have slightly different times for playtime and lunchtime but this will all be explained for them*
- *The school day has staggered start and finish times*
- *Parents will line up at designated areas around school for drop off and pick up times*

Settling in and new routines throughout the day

- *It is important to remind the children that our school hasn't changed, we still have the same teachers, we have our school values, we still wear the same school uniform and celebrate our special occasions and our children's' fantastic achievements*
- *However, some things in school may have changed a bit so do tell your child things may look a bit different but they will still see their teachers from last year as well as get to know those for this year and friendly mid-day supervisors throughout the school day.*
- *Mrs Voyce and Mrs Millen will still take care of them if they are poorly or unwell*
- *There will be lots of hand washing throughout the day! Lots of classes have a song to hum to make sure they wash for long enough (20 seconds recommended)*
- *Each child in Years 1-4 will have their own desk and own pencil case with everything they need to learn, including their own glue stick. This will make some children very happy!*
- *Moving around school in your year group bubble, children will be reminded to adopt a 'space bubble' (arms outstretched in a big circle to have space from those next to you or '1 2 3 go' (move from one place to another in school in gaps of 3 seconds, so they can allow a safe distance between themselves and their friends*
- *Some play equipment we can't use but all the rest will be cleaned routinely throughout the day / left in the sunshine as necessary*
- *There will be a designated place in the year group bubble for those children who need a quiet space or a time to chat or reflect*
- *There will be adults in the classroom who your child can speak to if they are worried or concerned about the new routines*
- *There will be short exercise breaks throughout the school day for children to help them to focus and concentrate*