



## Dear Parents & Friends of St John's School,

Hello and "Welcome Back Everyone!" I hope everyone is rested and ready to begin a new term. I will be sending this welcome back letter at the end of the holidays, in order to support return to school – what to wear; times of drop off and pick up etc, as well as the day before term begins, as a reminder of key dates and processes and procedures for the beginning of this academic year.

We are delighted to welcome Mr Pallant, our new Deputy Headteacher, Safeguarding and Assessment Lead. I know he is very excited to be part of St John's School Team. We are delighted that Mrs Falle has joined us as our new School Administrator. We are looking forward to getting to know you both. Thank you for donations to Mrs Love's Leaving present. We were able to buy her a lovely pair of earrings from Catherine Best.

At the time of writing, there has been **no central guidance or comment regarding uniform for schools**. I believe everyone is holding back from providing specific direction to the last possible minute, in order to see how the land lies and reflect on the changes that are occurring all the time. I have contacted several headteachers and we are planning on doing the same thing: i.e. **revert to uniform in order to create a sense of belonging and normality. I would like children to attend school in either summer/ winter uniform / or PE tracksuits/ kits/ or a mixture of the two (e.g. white PE shirt/ shorts). This will mean that everyone will be wearing green and white and we look part of the same community.** This way parents can use different aspects of the uniform in order to wash items regularly, use up parts of uniform that children can still wear and be ready to revert to full uniform for the correct days as soon as possible. I know a couple of schools will do something different. They have the right to be autonomous. My viewpoint, however, is echoed by the majority of Headteachers I have contacted.

We will enjoy an exciting Staff Inset Day on Wednesday September 2<sup>nd</sup>, reflecting on different ways of developing feedback in school and how we support children with a range of strategies and skills. We will have school training in recording concerns that may impact on children and their well-being. We will also be working on our interactive approach to science learning and teaching and how pupils will journal their understanding. Science is an on track subject area for us this year, providing opportunities for questioning, investigation, challenge and reflection, as we deliver and connect a range of scientific thinking. On September 14th, KS2 classes (it will probably remain just KS2 due to restrictions set by COVID 19), will spend an exciting day being scientists in the Scout Hut area. We know that this visit will inspire **cross curricular** writing. We will celebrate and display our science learning and the developments we are making in Science throughout the school, during **pop-in afternoon**, planned – we hope - for **Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> October from 2:30 – 3:30pm. More information will follow soon.**

### St Juff's Walk.

As we were unable to participate in St Juff's Walk in May (one of our favourite events in the year), we decided to organise this exciting **socially distanced** challenge for **Friday September 11<sup>th</sup>**. Nursery will not participate on this occasion ~as the children will be settling at this time~ and Reception children will walk a specially designed route. Proceeds from any donations made will go towards buying new IT equipment for our pupils and enhancing DT opportunities through cooking, sewing and building structures and designs.

**It is lovely to welcome new members into our community** – this includes children and their families in Nursery, Reception, as well new pupils, who will begin a new journey at St John's School.

Hopefully, when we are allowed, our whole school Assemblies will focus on the **importance of choices we make and how we collaborate and support each other, building confidence in ourselves and showing kindness to everyone in our community**. Our first few assemblies – conducted in bubbles - will particularly focus on the story of “The Lost Words” and the importance of valuing everyone as an individual, respecting others and ourselves and the joy of communication: using words positively. We plan to celebrate our culture and the culture of other people through Harvest, Remembrance Day, Diwali, Hanukkah and Christmas, as well as consider how we support communities less fortunate than ourselves through Harvest gifts for Grace Trust and towards Romanian families, through the Mustard Seed Shoebox appeal.

### **Procedures, Policies and Systems!**

**Recently, I was sent information that school start and end times will need to remain staggered. As a result, from the commencement of this term – Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September, we will follow the plan below:**

#### **Start of day –**

Yr. 6 – 8:25 a.m.

Yr. Reception and Yr. 3 – 8:30 a.m.

Yr. 5 and Yr. 2 – 8:35 a.m.

Yr. 4 and Yr. 1 – 8:40 a.m.

Nursery – 8:45 a.m.

**This means different year groups will avoid mixing on entry to school and washing hands can be staggered.**

#### **Exit times**

Reception – 2:30 p.m.

Yr. 1 and Yr. 2 – 2:40 p.m.

Nursery 2:45 p.m.

Yr. 5, 4, 3 – 2:50 p.m.

Yr. 6 – 3:00 p.m.

#### **Entry and Exit into and from school.**

**Years Reception to Year 4 will enter via their classroom door and Years 5/6 will enter through the main school entrance.** Please can parents either contact Mrs Falle to leave a message for their class teacher or speak to the class teacher at the classroom door at drop off and pick up time. We will have a teacher on the road to help with pupil exit of cars and another teacher in the playground to guide pupils to their entry point. **This is the same safe process developed for the return to school in June. It worked well and proved to provide a very safe approach to the beginning and end of the school day.** It was well received by parents and children too. We are discouraging parents inside school currently **unless it is essential.** **At the end of the school day, we will encourage parents to meet their children in the playground – or for younger children, outside their classroom door – to avoid mixing of year groups. Please could you vacate the playground as swiftly as possible. Thank you.**

As mentioned before, I do need to make clear to all our families in school that I have been given a directive from CYPES, to only allow leave of absence during term time, when there are exceptional circumstances. The Policy from Education states: **The Education Department does not, at any time support leave during term time, however, in exceptional circumstances head teachers have discretionary power to grant leave in accordance with the Attendance Policy. Parents do not have**

**the automatic right to withdraw their child/ren from school and must request permission in advance from the head teacher.** Please do not organise for your children to be absent from school without filling in an "Application for Leave" sheet first. The policy requires parents to complete this application for authorised leave (obtainable from Mrs Falle and our website) before leave in term time can be considered. **When a parent removes a child from school without permission, they will be recorded as taking unauthorised leave. Unauthorised leave is followed up by our Education Welfare Officer. Parents who wish to take their child/ren out of school longer than four weeks will have to re-apply for their school placement.** Thank you to those parents who have followed the Education Department's Policy. For the past few years, our attendance figures were the highest in the Island, averaging **97.7%**. Thank you for supporting with this. It makes a huge difference to your child's learning.

Written permission is needed before children can arrive at school **earlier than 8:30 am**. Please do not leave children playing in the playground between 8:15 - 8:30 a.m. No child can be outside unattended; it is a health and safety issue. **Normally, school begins at 8:45 am and children arriving after this time are recorded as late. We will continue with this process, even with staggered start times allowing a few minutes grace, to pupils in classes with a slightly later arrival time.** Parents of children in Years 5/6, who will be walking home from school independently, need to notify the school. This is to help us care for your child's safety. **Please remember that all children from Nursery to Year 4 now come into/ and leave school from their classroom doors. Years 5 and 6 come in and leave through the main school entrance.**

**St John's School PTA Curriculum Evening** will take place **Monday 21st September at 7:00 pm**. This is a very important meeting as the PTA and staff members will be outlining important plans for the year as well as classroom expectations. Their introductory talk will be repeated for those with two or more children in school. The evening should finish at approx. 9pm with a refreshing drink in the Piazza. Many of you have been before and whilst the format is familiar, detail changes year on year. Please make every effort to be there and support your school community. We will share a short DVD of some of our amazing learning experiences last year. **We look forward to seeing you! We will be following up families who did not attend, as important information will have been missed.**

**Please remember that the school will be closed throughout the day on Thursday September 10<sup>th</sup> – Battle of Britain Day - when staff will be working in teams to develop plans in different subject areas and setting their targets for the year with the Leadership Team.**

**Introductory Parent Consultations will take place on Tuesday 6th October from 3:15 p.m.- 6:15 p.m. and Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> October from 3:15-5:30 pm. Mrs Falle will notify you when appointment times are to be placed on the main wall in the office.**

**Our second school inset day will be Monday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2021 and therefore, our Summer Term will begin on Tuesday April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021.**

**We are positive that the academic year 2020 -2021, will be an amazing year.**

**Yours sincerely,**

**Trudie De La Haye**