

July 2020



SIR JAMES SMITH'S
COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Dear Parents/Carers and Pupils

I do hope this letter finds you well. As you will be aware, the Government has announced that from September all children are expected to return to school full time. The Department for Education (DfE) has produced detailed guidance as to how this can be achieved safely which together with the latest information and advice available has been used to put together our plan.

Last week I sent you a presentation outlining the school's plan for September and asking for your questions. I have tried to address those questions in the pages that follow. A Frequently Asked Questions page will be on our website under the Parents – Coronavirus and will be updated regularly. Please do continue to get in touch through the usual channels if there are still questions you want answers to. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your fantastic response and for your support throughout this time. To our parents and carers, we really do appreciate the encouragement you have given your children in completing their remote learning tasks and in joining our live tutor sessions. Staff here at SJS have been encouraged by the amount and quality of work that our pupils have completed and with the attendance of pupils in years 6, 9 and 10 when it was possible to invite them in. I only wish we had been able to see every year group. We appreciate that there will be many who are anxious about a return to school. Between the Frequently Asked Questions you have helped produce and the details in this letter, our aim is for everybody to feel that they understand how school is going to work in September and so feel confident about getting SJS pupils back to where we know they want to be, at school, learning with their friends.

Bubbles

The guidance from the DfE makes it clear that consistent groups of pupils help reduce the risk of coronavirus transmission. These will need to incorporate entire year groups to make the delivery of the curriculum by specialist teachers possible. SJS Pupils will be organised into one of three bubbles:

- Pupils in Y10 and Y11 will make up the **Orange bubble**
- Pupils in Y8 and 9 will make up the **Blue bubble**
- Pupils in Y7 who are least familiar with the school site will make up the **Green bubble**

Each bubble will have their own designated area where pupils will go on arrival. To be able to coordinate this successfully we respectfully ask that pupils do not arrive at school before 8.10am.

The strictest hand and respiratory hygiene standards will be observed at all times but especially on arrival, before/after break time and in between all lessons. To ensure this, all bubble areas will have hand sanitising facilities as well as use of a specific toilet block for their bubble alone which they will access at break times.

This means that tutor time, lesson changeover (for the **Green** and **Blue** bubbles) and break time will be spent:

- **Orange:** WE1 & Amphitheatre, H6 and adjacent seating area
- **Blue:** Sports Centre and Tennis Courts
- **Green:** Gym and Small Field

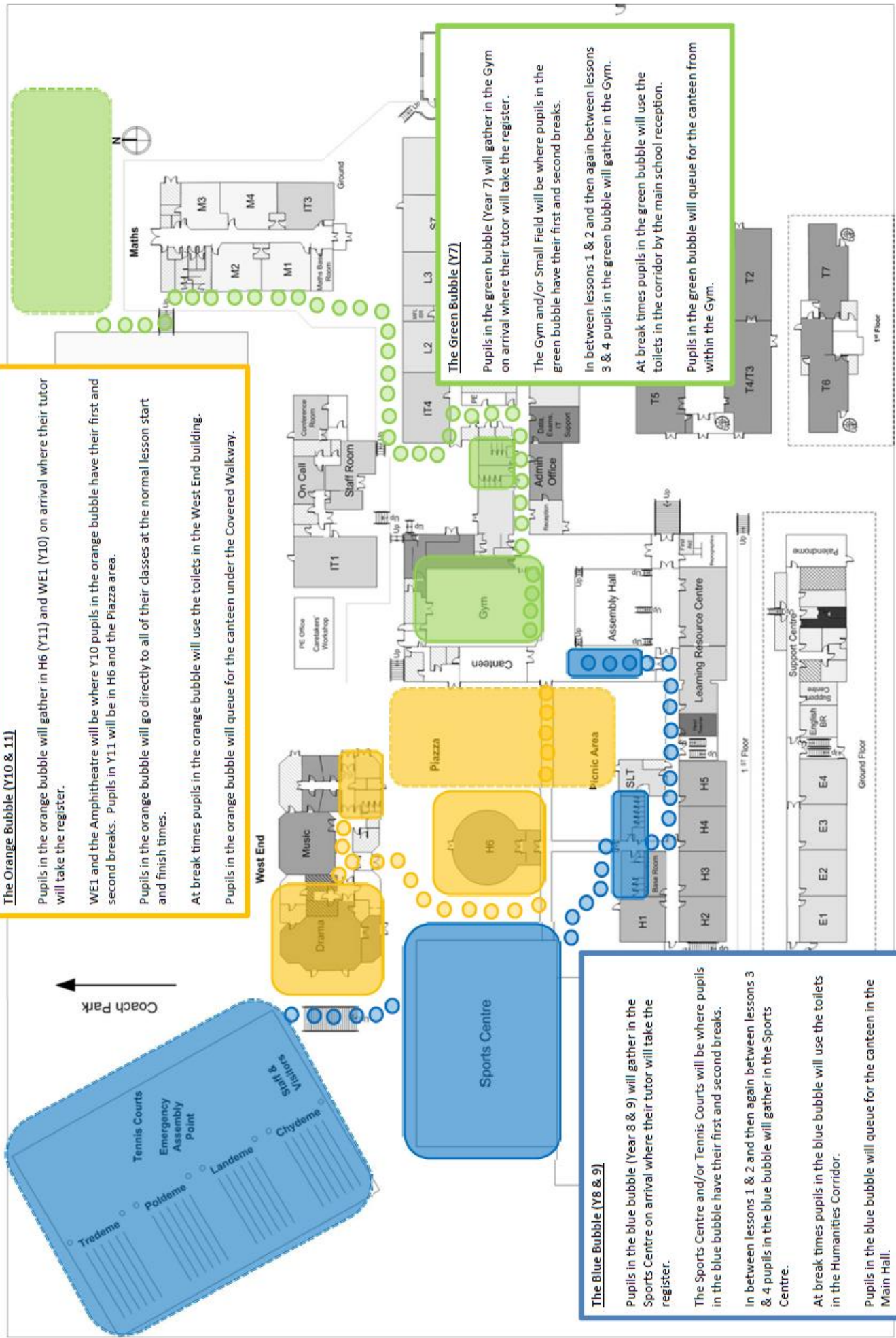
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The Orange Bubble (Y10 & 11)

Pupils in the orange bubble will gather in H6 (Y11) and WE1 (Y10) on arrival where their tutor will take the register.

WE1 and the Amphitheatre will be where Y10 pupils in the orange bubble have their first and second breaks. Pupils in Y11 will be in H6 and the Piazza area.

Pupils in the orange bubble will go directly to all of their classes at the normal lesson start and finish times.

At break times pupils in the orange bubble will use the toilets in the West End building.

Pupils in the orange bubble will queue for the canteen under the Covered Walkway.

The Green Bubble (Y7)

Pupils in the green bubble (Year 7) will gather in the Gym on arrival where their tutor will take the register.

The Gym and/or Small Field will be where pupils in the green bubble have their first and second breaks.

In between lessons 1 & 2 and then again between lessons 3 & 4 pupils in the green bubble will gather in the Gym.

At break times pupils in the green bubble will use the toilets in the corridor by the main school reception.

Pupils in the green bubble will queue for the canteen from within the Gym.

The Blue Bubble (Y8 & 9)

Pupils in the blue bubble (Year 8 & 9) will gather in the Sports Centre on arrival where their tutor will take the register.

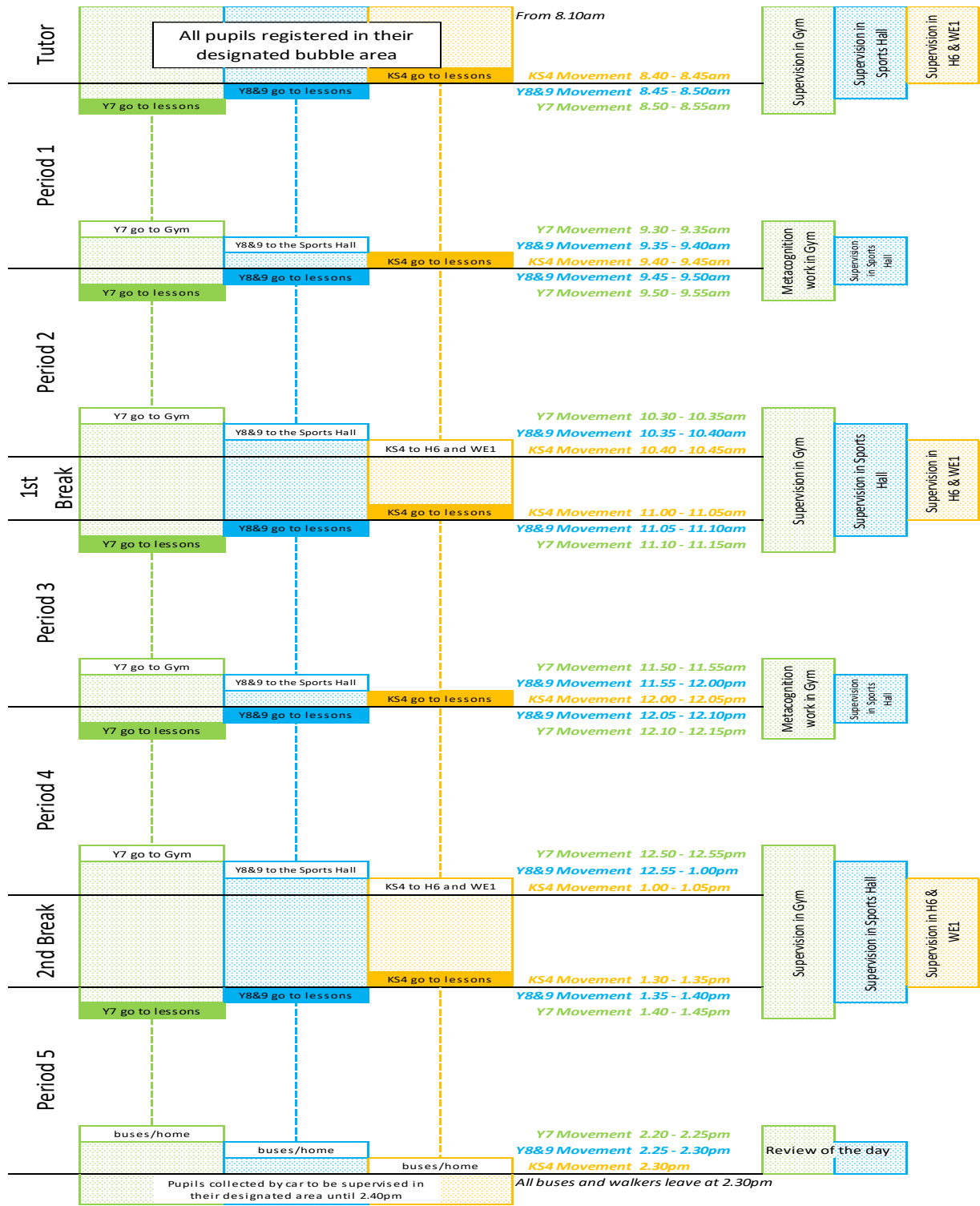
The Sports Centre and/or Tennis Courts will be where pupils in the blue bubble have their first and second breaks.

In between lessons 1 & 2 and then again between lessons 3 & 4 pupils in the blue bubble will gather in the Sports Centre.

At break times pupils in the blue bubble will use the toilets in the Humanities Corridor.

Pupils in the blue bubble will queue for the canteen in the Main Hall.

Staff at SJS will be working hard to ensure that pupils enjoy their typical experience of school. This means that lessons will be taught in the usual rooms, bubbles will not be restricted to having lessons in only certain areas of the school. Instead, we will ensure that the start and finish time of lessons is staggered so that only one bubble is moving around the school site at any one time:



Uniform and Equipment

In keeping with the ambition of making the experience of school as normal as possible and in line with the Department for Education guidance, all pupils will attend school in their full school uniform. Thank you for your support with this. Uniform is in stock and available online from swischoolwear.co.uk with a recommendation that orders are placed before the 3 August to ensure delivery in time for the start of term.

With limited changing facilities in school we are asking that pupils in the **Green** and **Blue** bubbles wear their PE kit to school on the days that PE is on their timetable. To stay warm, if it is cooler, we ask that they wear their school jumper over their PE top and can wear suitable tracksuit bottoms. On these days only they can wear their PE footwear to school. Pupils in the **Orange** bubble will have full access to changing facilities and so will wear their normal uniform and bring PE kit with them to get changed into.

Please support us by helping your child prepare for each school day. It is important that they bring the correct books each day, check their timetable for when they have PE so they can wear their kit and to have their own resources in their pencil case. The guidance is clear that sharing stationary increases risk so students need their own equipment. Whilst not exhaustive we would recommend that every pupil comes to school equipped with:

- Pens/biro – black, blue, red and green
- Pencil, sharpener and rubber
- Coloured pencils and/or felt tips
- Highlighter pen, safety scissors, glue stick
- Ruler, compass and protractor
- Scientific Calculator

There will be no access to lockers whilst pupils have to be kept in their bubbles. With all equipment needing to be carried in their bag, being organised each evening for the next school day ahead will be really important and your help with this will be crucial.

Transport

Our large rural catchment area means that two thirds of our pupils travel to and from school by bus. School Transport is something that is organised by Cornwall Council and isn't something the school can affect. What we can do is ensure that all pupils observe the following guidance when catching the bus from school and ask that all pupils do the same when boarding the bus on the way to school:

- In keeping with current guidance on the use of public transport, **wear a facemask when on the bus**. You will be shown by a member of staff how to remove it correctly when you arrive at school. Facemasks are not required when at school throughout the day.

*In fact, the current guidance explains that wearing a facemask in school will **increase** the risk of transmission as their use will encourage children to touch their faces more frequently. They also make communication more difficult, therefore they are not recommended to be worn during the school day.*

- Pupils in the **Orange** bubble to occupy the rear seats on the bus. Pupils in the **Green** bubble to take up the front rows whilst pupils in the **Blue** bubble should seat themselves towards the middle of the bus leaving empty rows of seats between bubbles where possible.

We sent a brief survey out to parents this week about transport. Understandably, more parents are intending to drive their children to school themselves. In some respects this will be helpful as it will free up more space on the bus which in turn will make seating in bubbles that bit easier. In other ways having more cars trying to get to school at the same time presents us with other challenges. To help keep everybody safe we ask that parents driving their children to school in the morning use the Sportsmans entrance to the school, following the road around to the left, up to the staff car park where there will be an area designated for pupil drop off. The Dark Lane entrance is not to be used as those pupils who walk to school will use this route.

Use of the car park at Camelford Leisure Centre has been a cause of concern for some time. Things get very congested at peak times in the inadequate space there. We respectfully ask that parents **do not use the Leisure Centre car park** to collect or drop off their child. None of you want to be the cause of a car accident involving a child and the risk at the Leisure Centre car park will be too great. Instead, we will make sure that staff park away from the Astroturf pitch, leaving that side of the staff car park available (accessed from the Sportsmans entrance) for both pick up and drop off. When collecting your children by car please note that this **must not happen before 2.40pm**. The buses will have left the site by then making it safe for you to come and collect your child who will be supervised in their bubble area until 2.40pm.

Pupils should not travel to school by bike. The roads around us are far too dangerous for pupils to travel on by bike and there are no bike sheds on site.

The School Canteen

The school canteen will be open during both breaks serving the normal menu of hot and cold food and drink. What won't be normal is the way pupils queue to access it. As you will have seen from the timings of the day, pupils in the **Blue** and **Green** bubbles will have a slightly longer breaktime than those in the **Orange** bubble. Because of this:

- Pupils in the **Orange** bubble will access the canteen area first to purchase their food before returning to their designated area for the rest of break. They will queue under the covered walkway.
- Pupils in the **Blue** bubble will have been queuing in the Main Hall and will access the canteen area next.
- Pupils in the **Green** bubble with the longest breaktime will have been queuing for the canteen within the Gym and will access the canteen last.

A hand sanitising station will be at the entrance to the canteen and will be used by all pupils before entering. Only enough food for each bubble will be set out. Between each bubble getting to go into the canteen, the fridge and other areas will be restocked and hard surfaces cleaned.

We won't be using the biometric thumb reader any more. All pupils will be given a card which will allow for remote payment and we ask that you top up your child's cashless catering account online as the top-up machine in the Main Hall won't be available.

The start of the Autumn Term

To help pupils and staff get used to the way in which the bubbles are going to work we will be staggering the start of the school year as follows:

- Monday 7 September 2020 only the **Blue** bubble (pupils in years 8 and 9) comes to school
- Tuesday 8 September 2020 the **Blue** and **Green** (pupils in year 7) bubbles come to school
- Wednesday 9 September 2020 the **Blue** and **Green** bubbles come to school
- Thursday 10 September 2020 the **Blue**, **Green** and **Orange** (pupils in years 10 and 11) bubbles come to school. All pupils will be back in school from this point on.

This will give those pupils who have not had a chance to come into school since March the opportunity to find their feet on the Monday. The following two days will give staff and pupils the experience of minimising contact between bubbles. Taking this cautious approach to the start of term will mean that we are as ready as we can possibly be to safely welcome all pupils back on site from Thursday 10 September.

I hope that the details described here have given you the information you need to be able to look forward to the start of term in September. You will find our updated Risk Assessment, Behaviour Policy and the FAQ sheet on our website together with information for Year 11 pupils about how GCSE results are going to be issued this August.

Sir James Smith's is a special place, made so by the community it serves and the brilliant people who work here. Whilst September 2020 is going to be different in many ways, everything that really matters will be the same. This will still be a school that puts the happiness of its pupils first as it prepares them for the interesting choices they will go on to make. The start of a new school year is always an exciting time and in that respect, this September won't be any different.

Have a restful summer, I look forward to welcoming you all back, the pupils that bring this school alive have been away for far too long.

Yours faithfully



Kristien Carrington
Headteacher