

St Andrew's Major Church in Wales Primary School

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Dear Parents/Carers,

17th June 2020

I wrote to you last week outlining some of the preparations to the building and classrooms for re-opening the school safely on 29th June. Our plans are now well underway and I am able to share more of these with you today. Most of our decisions have been discussed at length with our cluster of schools in Dinas Powys, Penarth and Llandough and we have developed a very consistent approach. These plans have been made for the initial 3 weeks as we are still awaiting further guidance on the 4th 'extra' week. **I need to make it very clear** that these plans could change at any time, particularly if we face issues with staffing. Whilst Welsh Government have asked schools to open, nothing is statutory and if at any time I feel it unsafe to do so, we will not open. We already have a number of staff unable to be in school as they are in the vulnerable group and this could be made more challenging if any other members of staff are taken ill. Although the children will be in much smaller groups, there will be an increased pull on staffing to monitor toilets and manage staggered break times etc. as well as running the childcare provision.

Nursery

Unfortunately due to the constraints on space and staffing issues, we have had to make the decision not to open to Nursery for this period. This will obviously be reviewed for September. Whilst I know this will be disappointing for some, health and safety had to take priority. Mrs Bayliss will be in touch for a catch up with you before we finish.

Groupings

Welsh Government advice to schools states we should have a maximum of 30% of pupils in at any one time including those who are placed in the school's childcare hub (children of key workers and those deemed vulnerable). We are also aiming to give each pupil the opportunity for 3 visits which Welsh government said was their preference.

- Each class has been split into 4 groups of up to 8. (Labelled ABCD simply for ease of planning)
- We have ensured all siblings are placed in the same letter group and will therefore attend on the same day.
- Teachers have also taken into account friendship groups where possible.
- Even though some parents did not respond to the survey or responded 'no', we have now placed every pupil from Reception to Year 6 in a group. If your child does not attend, this is fine and you don't need to let us know. We just decided this was the easiest way to plan and gives people the opportunity to change their mind at any time.

If you do not feel comfortable sending your children into school, then I want to reassure you there is no consequence for this. Children should only come in if you feel comfortable that they do so. It is also essential that you only send your children to school if they are well. If they show any signs of illness, particularly if they develop a high temperature, persistent cough or loss of taste/smell, then please keep them at home.

Weekly Plan (repeated for following 2 weeks)

Day	Groups in 9am to 1pm	8.30 to 4.30
Monday	A	Key worker hub
Tuesday	B	Key worker hub
Wednesday	DEEP CLEAN and teachers' PPA	Key worker hub
Thursday	C	Key worker hub
Friday	D	Key worker hub

We decided upon this option for the following reasons.

- Equity for all statutory age pupils.
- Easier for families with more than one child.
- Rhythm for pupils (i.e. same day each week for 3 weeks)
- Opportunity to spend time with their class teacher and LSAs where possible. (Please note some staff will not be in school for this period)

We will let you know which group your child/ren will be in by the end of this week.

Please do not request to change groups as a huge amount of planning has taken place so far and it is impossible to put children with all of their friends.

Drop off and Collection

More guidance will be sent out before the children's return including more information on moving around the site. We are aiming to create a film so that the children can be familiar with the way their classes will look when they return. In the meantime, some general arrangements are listed below:

Start of the day

- **8.50 – 9.15** – Staggered start for all. We decided that having different start times for each year group would not work due to siblings arriving together and the likelihood of people being late for their narrow slot. If everyone can come in slowly over the 20 minutes, then this should be manageable whilst maintaining social distancing. No one will be marked 'late' on register. **Please do not arrive before 8.50** as this will cause problems.
- **All pupils (including Year 6)** must be brought to school **and collected** for at least the first week in order for parents to assist the children with social distancing queuing.
- **Parents and pupils** will queue along the 2m markings outside the school gate and enter keeping to the 2m markings at all times. Children will be sent to their relevant classes and parents will **leave via the double gates near the faith garden**. Please do not hang around chatting etc. Leave the site safely but quickly, ensuring social distancing.
- There will obviously be staff around to guide everyone.
- Please note, **the layby will be closed** to vehicles to ensure the safety of pedestrians.

End of the sessions

- A similar system to the morning with a staggered finish from **12.50 – 1pm**. Classes will line up on the field near the jungle gym. Parents queue and pupils will be sent to the parents at the front of the queue. Parents and pupils leave via the double gates. Again, please do not hang around. Leave the site safely but quickly, ensuring social distancing.

These arrangements will be reviewed to ensure the systems work so please keep an eye on communications.

Transport

Parents are requested to make use of active travel methods to bring their children into us on the days allocated. This means if you can walk, scoot, or ride to school we ask that you do so. If that is not possible, we ask that you drive your children in. Please remember **all** children must be brought to school by an adult.

The Local Authority are endeavouring to ensure that transport is available to those who qualify and have no other means to get to school, however please be aware that they cannot guarantee that all needs can be met due to the social distancing requirements on transport.

Communication with school/home

In line with the Guidance, we will be minimising all visitors to the school. Staff will not be able to speak face to face with parents at drop off or collection time. If you need to speak with the teacher, we ask this is done via telephone. We could possibly arrange a meeting via Microsoft Teams. If this is not an option then any face to face meeting will need to be arranged **in advance** in order for us to put in place social distancing measures. The school office will not be operating in the usual way and parents will not be permitted to enter the building to speak to office staff. Wherever possible, I would like to encourage you use email or telephone. I ask that you observe all signage and follow any instructions given in order to keep everyone safe.

What the visits will be like for the children.

Children will not be expected to wear school uniform for these visits. We do ask that they wear sensible clothes including trainers for outdoor learning as there will be no changing into PE kits etc. They may also need a rain coat if it rains and a sun hat if it is hot. They must not bring in any other belongings from home except for a **labelled water bottle** (which every child will need please) and any medication e.g. asthma pumps. Anything else will be sent home with parents in the morning.

The Education Minister, Kirsty Williams' plan is for pupils to be given the opportunity to **'Check in, catch up and prepare for Summer and September'**. These sessions will not be focussing on pupils' academic progress but more on their physical and mental health and well-being, as we prepare them for what the new 'normal' will look like in school. Staff will not be following any set curriculum but will be planning fun and engaging activities with opportunities for them to discuss what the past three months have been like and what to expect in September. Wherever possible, the pupils will be outside as this is the safest place for everyone to be. A huge thank you to the support staff who have worked so hard over the last few weeks to improve and enhance our outdoor areas.

Break times and outdoor activities will be timetabled and staggered throughout the various year groups to ensure children are kept within their 'bubbles'.

As a cluster of schools, it was decided that managing lunch times was an area that needs further consideration in terms of risk of transmission of the virus. For this reason, we have decided on a lengthened morning with a healthy snack and milk which school will provide for all children.

Childcare Provision (Hubs)

In order to ensure the safety of all staff and pupils, and to adhere to the guidelines set by Welsh Government on social distancing, we are following Local Authority advice and will not be able to accept any new registrations for childcare from the 22nd June. Any families already making use of the provision in the Hub can continue to do so until the end of term. Parents who work in schools should contact the school directly to enquire about childcare. If you feel you have extenuating circumstances then please contact me.

Childcare provision will normally operate from 8.30 – 4.30, depending on the availability of staff. Please be aware that if your child is making use of childcare provision in school, they will not be able to move across from class provision to childcare on the same day for health and safety reasons. There will no longer be meals provided and children in childcare provision will need to bring a packed lunch.

Finally

By the end of the week, we will let you know which group your child/ren are in. Next week we will also send you information to share with the children about what to expect when they come for their visits.

After 3 months apart, we are really looking forward to seeing many of you during the week of 29th June. Until then, please contact us with any queries you may have. I thank you for your patience and support.

Yours faithfully,



Gen Hallett
Headteacher