

St Andrew's Major Church in Wales Primary School

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Dear Parents/Carers,

Friday 12th February 2021

On the 29th of January, the First Minister announced that if the number of coronavirus cases continued to fall over the following weeks that plans would be put in place to return our youngest learners in our primary schools back to school from the 22nd of February 2021. The most recently published medical evidence is reported to support the phased return of learners back into school and as a result the Education Minister confirmed on the 5th of February 2021 that foundation phase learners are set to return to school after the half-term break.

Your support with your child's home learning has been invaluable in recent months but a return to school is now required to enable your child/ren to benefit from much needed face to face learning with their peers so that they can reach their academic potential. Research tells us that time spent out of education settings can impact adversely on a child's development, and your support in enabling your child/ren to return to school from the 22nd of February is now needed.

Return for Foundation Phase

I am very pleased to announce that all children from Nursery to Year 2 will return to school as normal on Monday 22nd February. Some schools are taking a day or two to plan and prepare, but we decided to get the children back in as soon as possible. Most of the guidance remains as before in terms of handwashing, cleaning regimes, ventilation and vigilance around symptoms etc. However, there are some areas where there is now an added emphasis. Contact groups will remain in classes (i.e. maximum of 30 pupils) but in terms of staffing, we are taking extra precautions by restricting every staff member to one contact group only. This includes managing PPA and lunchtimes etc. This may not be sustainable when the juniors return but during this period of uncertainty, I feel it important to minimise the movement of staff. In addition, all staff will wear medical grade masks or specific masks issued by Welsh Government. This will include when in classes with the children. Otherwise, arrangements from before Christmas will remain in place as follows:

- Staggered start from 8.45 to 9am – Queuing and one way system as before.
- The bus will be running as usual
- Breakfast and After School Club will be available from Tuesday 23rd February. Deb Eynon will be in touch with relevant parents.
- All children to wear uniform please (Kit on Well-being days as before)
- Staggered end of the day from 3.10 until 3.20. Please note that due to lower numbers, this is likely to take less time than before so please do not arrive after 3.20. Queuing and one way system as before.
- Hot lunches will be available to all pupils every day whilst we have reduced numbers. Please ensure Parent Pay accounts are always in credit. Please note there will be no baguettes or sandwiches but obviously you can continue to send in your child/ren with a packed lunch. We will return on week 1 – please see menu attached. Every child must have their own labelled water bottle please.
- Wellbeing days will also continue as before although there will be some temporary changes to the days:
 - Nursery = Friday
 - Reception = Wednesday
 - Year 1 = Thursday
 - Year 2 = Tuesday

- Given the guidelines, the children will be going outside at regular intervals. With the cold weather, please ensure they come to school with a warm coat.

Provision for vulnerable children and the children of Key Workers in Key Stage 2

This will also resume from February 22nd and the booking form will be go live from next Monday 15th and close at 5pm on Thursday.

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=Ug4_TzS3ZEGUCRtgHRR5k5sTZ8rn83NIhuiGLncxhvBUNVRaNkIIMzlwVUtZMU9WQU9BWFY4NzM1RS4u

The children in this group will be combined to form one contact group as they have been since January. KS2 teachers will be providing the remote learning which is extremely time consuming and most of our LSAs will be returning to the Foundation Phase classes. Therefore, a supply teacher will be working with the Key Worker group along with support from some of our LSAs. These staff, including the supply teacher will not cross into other contact groups. Due to staffing issues, we will need to stick very closely to the guidelines and it may be that places offered previously are not sustainable with the possible need to prioritise provision for front line blue light staff and carers. For those who have been using the provision since January, there will be a few changes so please note the following:

- Uniform must be worn please. Remember a warm coat too.
- The timings will now revert to the same timings as before Christmas and in line with the rest of the school – 8.45-9 start and 3.10-3.20 finish. The queuing system to enter and leave school will be the same as the rest of the children. The children will all walk around the car park side of the building and meet in the Year 6 classroom. The children can access the school bus if they usually do.
- There is no wrap around provision for Nursery Pupils in school. The provision is for KS2 only.
- You can now opt for your child to have a hot lunch but there will be no baguettes. Please ensure Parent Pay accounts are always in credit. We will return on week 1 – please see menu attached.
- Breakfast and After School Club will be available from Tuesday 23rd February. Deb Eynon will be in touch with relevant parents.

Key Stage 2 Children remaining at home

Whilst the government decide the next steps for education, sadly, the vast majority of our KS2 children will not yet be returning. We really do understand how disappointing this will be, particularly as many of them see younger siblings returning to school. Remote learning will continue but we would like to take another step forward in terms of this provision and to try and keep the children engaged with their learning. We will be inviting the children to join their teacher and classmates live every morning for a half hour catch up with regards to their learning. During this time, there can be a discussion around any misconceptions etc. from the previous day as well as the learning activities for that day. The meets will continue to be on GoToMeeting and the link will be put on See-saw by the class teachers. The same link can be used each day. We are trying to avoid issues with siblings having overlapping times so the times are listed below.

- 9.30 = Year 6
- 10 am = Year 4 and Year 5 (separate meetings but there are no siblings in these classes)
- 10.30 = Year 3

We will also continue with the Well-being catch ups once a week but these will now be for the whole class together using the same link as the daily meets – there will be no live morning session on this day.

- Tuesday = Year 3 at 1pm
- Wednesday = Year 4 at 1pm
- Thursday = Year 5 at 1pm
- Friday = Year 6 at 1pm

See-Saw archive

I am so impressed with the amount of work many children have done on See-Saw. However, I feel it very important for everyone to have a week off and this includes the children, parents and staff. I have instructed staff to archive the current see-saw work next Monday morning which still gives you the weekend if you would like to catch up on this week's work.

PTA Muddy Faces Appeal

The PTA were delighted to see on Twitter this week that the school has accepted delivery of the den building kits donated as part of our Muddy Faces Appeal. These were tested by the children of Key Workers attending school and were given their seal of approval. Thank you to everyone who has already donated to the appeal - we really appreciate your support. We'll also be funding new waterproofs for the children when they return to school and some more welly racks. The Appeal remains open until after half term if you still wish to donate. <https://localgiving.org/appeal/samsmuddyfaces/> The more we raise, the more outdoor learning equipment we can fund. Keep up to date with our latest school fundraising appeals on Facebook or Twitter <https://www.facebook.com/groups/158387884190510> or @SAMS_PTA

Childcare Offer

Applications are now open for the Childcare Offer funding, for children born between 01/01/18 and 31/03/18. Funding will start on 12th April. This scheme offers 17.5 hours per week of childcare funding to working parents of 3-4 year olds, to 'wrap around' their part-time nursery provision. See separate attachments.

Clear messages from Welsh Government

Outside of school it will be important that children and their families continue to stay at home in line with Welsh Government's guidance, engage in essential travel only and limit their contact with others. Kirsty Williams, the Education Minister, has strongly advised that families continue to comply with the restrictions outside of school and that families avoid children's social contact with others outside of their family bubble. When collecting children from school, parents must keep to 2m social distancing and wear face coverings in and around school grounds so that we keep everyone safe. Only one adult taking children to and from school is recommended to minimise risks – if another adult is at home, the older siblings must stay with them. If you have no other option than to bring older siblings to drop off and collect Foundation Phase children, they must stay with you at all times and not wander off to chat with peers who also may be bringing siblings to school. Please do not remain around the school or the common socialising and allowing children to play – even if they are in the same school contact group. This will clearly be against the Government guidance and if cases rise, could mean schools closing again or a further delay in older pupils being able to return to face to face learning.

It is hard to believe it almost a year since schools first closed as a result of the pandemic. Although we may be some time away from returning to any sort of normality, with the vaccination programme and with Spring just around the corner, there is a feeling of hope. We really want to see our KS2 pupils joining us in school soon. In the meantime, if we all do our bit to keep ourselves and others safe, we will keep our school open as much as possible.

Thank you again for all of your hard work in supporting your child's learning at home. I appreciate that these have been very challenging times. I am sure you will also appreciate the tremendous efforts made by our school staff to deliver remote learning for your child/ren and also providing face to face learning for some pupils.

Wishing the whole school community a well-deserved half term

Yours faithfully,



Headteacher

Our value this half term is Perseverance.

Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance produces character; and character produces hope.

(Romans 5: 3-4)