



PEMBROKESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Portfield School

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Dear Parents, Carers and family members,

Return to School September 2020

I am writing to you to update you on our planning for the return to school in September 2020.

We have undertaken a range of work to help us plan for the safe return of our pupils and staff in September in line with the expectations of the Welsh Government. It is important to stress that we have planned for the return of all children by the week beginning 14th September 2020.

We have used the guidance from the Welsh Government and advice from the local authority to develop our plan and build upon the practices and procedures we have used in lockdown as a care hub and in the "Check in Catch up and Prepare" period that ends this week. We have shared our plan and risk assessment with the local authority for them to support us and approve our preparations and plan.

We understand that there may be parents who are still concerned about the situation and we can reassure you that we have and will adhere to the measures we have been recommended to follow in school. There may be a very few pupils who cannot return to school for a range of reasons and we will be looking to continue to provide support for their learning at home.

The term begins on Tuesday 1st September 2020 but we have agreed, along with other schools in Pembrokeshire that the first two days will be for staff to plan and prepare for the return of the pupils to their new classes. As a result Tuesday 1st and Wednesday 2nd September have been designated teacher planning days by the Local Authority and children will not attend school. Children will return to the new classes in September. This is not our usual practice but we believe it is best for all concerned if the move happens as we return to school.

For the rest of that week we will be inviting particular children into school on Thursday 3rd and Friday 4th September 2020. These will be pupils who are new to the school and those who are moving to a new class. They are being given this opportunity to attend in small groups to get to know the staff and facilitate a smooth transition.

The week beginning 7th September 2020 all pupils will be timetabled to attend school for part of the week. You will find in your pack a list of days when your child will be asked to attend school. Again the principle is to provide small groups to support their transition back to school.

It is the Welsh Government's expectation that all pupils will be back at school from Monday 14th September 2020. As a result, we have planned for school to be back to the "new normal" from this date.

The new normal will be different from how the school operated in March 2020 as we will continue to have in place practices and procedures that have support our need to reduce risk for our pupils and staff. These changes are outlined in our Leaflet for Parents that is also in your pack and can be found using the link. We will not be having classes gathering together for assembly or eating in the school hall. We will also continue to bring children directly into their classrooms and ask them to wash their hands on arrival and frequently during the school day.



TRANSPORT

We have been liaising with School Transport staff who will be organise routes, vehicles and staff, and if we have any information for you then we will send this out on our various platforms. It is important for School Transport and us to know if parents wish to transport their children to school as some have done over the recent weeks. We would also ask that if you wish your child to go back to using school transport then you give them at least two week's notice.

Autumn Half-Term

I would also remind everyone that the half-term holiday will begin on Monday 19th October 2020 and end on Friday 30th October 2020.

Staffing Changes

I am pleased to be able to confirm that the Governing Body have appointed Mr Damian Hewitt to the position of Head Teacher and he will be taking up the post in September. The school has also made a number of appointments to the teaching staff. Mr Gaskell, Miss Roberts and Miss Brown will be joining the teaching staff from September. I am sure you will give them your full support as you have to myself and the team at the school.

Home Learning Packs

The school has issued home learning packs for all pupils this week. These can be used for the rest of this week and in September to support learning when the pupils are not in school. Please remember there is also a great deal of activities on our school website.

Information

I would like to remind parents and carers that we will continue to use SCHOOP, our Facebook page and our website to issue updates during the holidays. I am mindful that the school may need to update you at any point so please do keep checking all these platforms for any information we send out.

I would like to wish you all a very happy and enjoyable summer. This past four months, has been very demanding for everyone. I hope you and your children are able to take some time to rest and enjoy the holidays.

Finally, I would like to thank all the staff at school for their support in running the Hub Care Provision and for the return to school. Your support has been invaluable. I would also wish good luck to everyone who is moving on from Portfield, our Year 14 leavers and staff who are leaving to face new challenges. Thank you all for your efforts at school as you have made this a very special school of which we can all very proud.

Yours sincerely,



Paul Hughes

Headteacher