

Growing and Learning Together through the Love of Christ.

Friday 19th June 2020

Annwyl/Dear Parents and Carers,

Firstly, thank you all for your support over the last thirteen weeks – words of encouragement, appreciation and simply doing what you can at home means a great deal to all the staff in school. It seems such a long time ago since we were all together and life was normal. Let’s hope and pray that things go back to the way they were in the not too distant future!

As you are all aware, the Welsh Government and the Local Authority have recently released a lot of guidance to support schools in making decisions about how best to open the school up safely for every year group. Planning for the re-introduction of pupils has been time consuming and complex, as we have endeavoured to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all at Henllys. The Local Authority and Welsh Government guidance is lengthy and plentiful, so I thank parents again, for their patience.

At Henllys, we completely understand both the need to re-introduce the children to school for many reasons and also the many anxieties around this. We are also realistic about the prospect of children’s understanding of ‘social distancing’ and our expectations of the children match this. Whilst things in the world have changed, we must not lose sight of the fact that this school is a happy, caring and loving community. We will:

* Encourage the children to regularly wash their hands for at least 20 secs.
* Endeavour to keep them within the same groups or ‘bubbles.’
* Ensure that they are with at least some of their friends.
* Use our school grounds to their full extent.
* ‘Check in’ and ‘catch up’ with **every** child who comes to school.
* Keep the ‘bubbles’ in each in classroom to a maximum of 8 in KS2 and 6 in FP.
* Give every child a separate learning pack with their own stationery etc.
* Have a lot of fun!

We will not be ‘barking’ at children who come within close proximity of one another or walk around classrooms with tape measures – but we will try to keep any physical contact between adults and children to an absolute minimum. However, we cannot give assurances that children will ‘social distance’ during their time in school. We also will not be checking the temperature of the children, as they walk through the school grounds but we insist that you do **not** to send them to school if they have **any** of the following symptoms:

* a high temperature
* a new, continuous cough
* loss of smell or taste

**Anyone displaying symptoms should stay at home for 7 days and should arrange to be tested. Anyone who lives with someone displaying symptoms but remains well should stay at home for 14 days from the day the first person became ill.**

Many of our staff have been working in our local hub which has been open to key worker children since the start of the lockdown, and therefore we have gained valuable experience in managing the logistics of children and staff on site during this time. Some parents have asked whether they must bring their child in during this next period. The school is understanding of people’s concerns and therefore will not be monitoring attendance at this time. All home learning will continue in its current format, but for three days per week, and we would like to encourage all parents to continue uploading all the fantastic work that the children are completing on a daily basis at home.

We have devised a plan for the next four weeks which is clearly outlined in the table below. We have staggered start and finish times and spaced the entry and exit points out as much as possible. However, if during that time the government guidelines change or the school feels the plan is no longer workable then it may be subject to change.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Dates** | **Monday** | **Tuesday** | **Wednesday** | **Thursday** | **Friday** |
| Week 1  (29/6/20) | Group A\* | Group B | PPA/cleaning day | Group C | Group D |
| Week 2  (6/7/20) | Group A\* | Group B | Group C | Group D |
| Week 3  (13/7/20) | Group A\* | Group B | Group C | Group D |

**\* Please note that the Group A ‘bubble’ will be a mix of key worker children and some of their friends/non key worker children.**

Thursday 25th June will be an INSET day (postponed from May 7th) and Friday 26th June will be used to prepare the school for reopening, so we will not be setting any home learning on these days. Monday 20th July will be our final INSET day so the school will be closed on this date. The last day of term is therefore on Friday 17th July 2020.

The children have been put into groups ensuring that siblings attend school on the same day. As a staff, we have obviously tried to consider friendship groups, however due to siblings having to take priority then this did cause some issues. Your class teacher will message you via dojo to let you know which groups your children are in.

All classes will enter and exit from their external doors except for Year 1, who will use the door adjacent to the classroom (the usual door for Year 1 pupils). The start time and finish times will be as follows:

**Years 2, 3 and 6: Start time 8:45 a.m. & finish time 3:00 p.m.**

**Years R, 1, 4 and 5: Start time 9:00 a.m. & finish time 3:15 p.m.**

All year groups will be kept separate, with no movement around the school except for toileting. Each ‘bubble’ will use a separate toilet in FP and separate cubicles in KS2 with very regular cleaning in between. Worship, lunch and all lessons will take place in the separate classrooms. Breaks and outdoor learning will be timetabled. Due to some staff having to shield, Mrs. Meehan will look after the Reception children on a Monday/Tuesday and Miss Needle on a Thursday/Friday. Mrs. Cook will be based full time in Year 4. All other year groups will be taught by their usual class teachers.

In order to minimise the number of parents on site at any one time, we would ask that all parents of KS2 pupils say goodbye to their children at the school gates. All children in KS2 will then need to go to their specific year group line, which will be clearly marked on the junior yard. Each year group will be spaced out and there will be clear markings which are two metres apart for the children to line up safely. The children’s class teachers will be on the yard to welcome the pupils and escort them into their classes via the external doors. We would ask that only one parent (and no younger siblings if possible) escort the pupils in Foundation Phase onto the infant yard. Once again, each year group will be spaced out and there will be clear markings which are two metres apart for the children to line up safely. The children’s class teachers will also be on the yard to welcome the pupils and escort them into their classes via the external doors. Please can we ask all parents to leave the site as quickly and safely as possible after dropping their children off (and adhere to strict social distancing rules at all times). At the end of each day the children will be brought back to these areas of the yard in FP for collection. KS2 pupils will also be dismissed from the junior yard. All paths around the close proximity of the school will be closed to ALL parents and children, as they are too narrow to ensure social distancing. All three external gates will be open to avoid any bottle necks, so please use the most convenient gate on entering and leaving the site. All gates will be promptly locked at 9:10 a.m. and they will not be reopened until 2:55 p.m.

**Key Worker Children**

There is a very limited capacity to provide additional childcare for key worker children. The Local Authority have stipulated that the key worker children who will have access to our on-site hub fall into just two categories which are as follows:

1. Children who attended the local hubs prior to 10th June 2020.
2. Children of school-based staff (in any setting) only.

Parents whose children are eligible to access our key worker hub have already been contacted. These children will be in class with their class teacher and some of their friends every Monday (i.e. in Group A) and then they will be in the key worker hub for the rest of the week. These are the only children in the school who will effectively be in two different ‘bubbles’ each week. I can only apologise to those of you who ticked the key worker box on the form, only to find that you are not eligible, but this has been a very clear directive from the Local Authority. Further information about the key worker hub will be sent out to the relevant parents next week.

**Here are some simple guidelines that we ask parents and children to observe:**

* Adults near and on the school site are expected to observe social distancing at all times.
* Only one adult per family should bring the child(ren) to school, and without other siblings where possible.
* Parents/children should enter and exit the school via the most convenient gate.
* Parents of key worker children using the hub will use the main entrance to drop off and pick up their children (further details to follow).
* All pupils coming into school will need to bring a healthy packed lunch (including drinks) with them. The canteen will not be running on any day.
* Children coming into school should wear their usual school uniform on the top half and tracksuit bottoms/legging or shorts on the bottom half. All pupils will need to wear trainers or daps. We are going to be relaxed about uniform. The most important thing is that children wear clean clothes every day.
* Children may bring small hand gel dispensers into school with them, if they can manage to use them independently.
* Some adults in school may choose to wear a face mask or need to use PPE.
* There is no breakfast club or after school club available for any children at this time.
* Children attending school must stick to their allotted time/date as we are unable to change the number/times of sessions.

It is important that parents understand that it is entirely your decision as to whether you would like your child to attend school during these weeks, or not, there is certainly no pressure, or judgement from the school either way.

If you have any queries or questions about any of the above, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me via dojo or you can e-mail me at minto.philippa@torfaen.gov.uk

I look forward to seeing many of you over the next few weeks. Wishing you all good health and wellbeing during these difficult times.

Kindest regards,

Mrs. Philippa Minto

N.B. Further questions and answers can be found on Torfaen’s website on the following link:

<https://www.torfaen.gov.uk/en/AboutTheCouncil/Homepage-Stories/Coronavirus/Education/Education-and-Learning.aspx>