

Key Stage 2 Return - March 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We are thrilled to have the opportunity to welcome all our Key Stage 2 (**Years 3, 4, 5 and 6**) back to school to resume face to face teaching!

All pupils in Key Stage 2(KS2) will return to school on Monday 15th March.

Please continue to read the remainder of this letter 😊! It contains some important amended information.

All protocols that were running efficiently during the Autumn Term 2020 will be re-instated, including the staggered start and finish times. The updated document, '**MPPS Operational Guidance for Parents**' is attached for your reference.

Hopefully, this wider reopening of school of schools across Wales will be a success in that the 'R Rate' remains below 1 and cases continue to fall. Please continue to work with us by maintaining social distance, wearing face coverings and ensuring as a school community we do all that we can inside and outside of school to follow Government guidance to make this return sustainable and successful.

As you are already aware all members of staff at school are now engaging in Lateral Flow Device (LFD) Testing twice a week in order to support public health in minimising the transmission of Coronavirus. It is therefore possible that class 'bubbles' will be closed temporarily if an LFD returns a positive result as we have to wait for a PCR Test to be accessed by the member of staff and the result received before reopening the class 'bubble'. When this is the case, children will need to return to online Blended Learning and a return to school date will be shared.

The Environment and Social Distancing

All measures that have been put in place since our return to school in September 2020 remain in place and further strengthened to reflect the new operational guidance. As you are aware changes to many areas of the school have been made to ensure that social distancing is continually promoted by all members of staff for the benefit of their own safety as well as that of the pupils.

I am sure you can all appreciate that these measures are necessary but our intention is not to over-do the 'hazard warnings' to the point that the pupils become 'blind' to the key message and that their school environment feels too alien to them and impacts their wellbeing.

Signage: This clear and child-friendly. We have had to put in some two metres distancing markers, rainbow tape, 'Waiting Spots' and hand-washing posters to support the pupils and minimize transmission.

Outside: The pupils will be spending as much time as possible outdoors to minimise the possibility of transmission. As you are already aware, a system of orange stars operates on yards and pathways to promote social distancing when the pupils are waiting to enter school and depart school and avoid the mixing of 'bubbles'.

School Office: During the remainder of the Spring and Summer Terms there will be no access for parents or visitors to the School Office. If you have an enquiry, or family emergency, please telephone or email the School Office and Mrs Kindred will respond accordingly. In the case of an emergency at school or if your child is unwell, you will be contacted in the usual way.

Indoors: There are 'Waiting Spots' on the floor to encourage social distancing and to address all the 'pinch points' such as the toilet and cloakroom areas. Pupils will be moving around the school very little due to the small corridors. The only indoor areas that they will be using are their classroom and an allocated toilet, including a single cubicle for each 'Bubble'. 'Bubbles', including pupils and staff are not permitted to mix unless circumstances are exceptional and this cannot be avoided. Each group will have a teacher in the classroom 'Bubble' and an additional adult.

All well-established routines to address hand and respiratory hygiene by both pupils and staff remain in place to minimize transmission. All surfaces will be sanitised regularly throughout the day and after every activity in each 'Bubble'. Access to toilets have to be carefully planned to ensure all pupils adhere to social distancing.

Hand sanitisation stations are available throughout the building but regular hand washing with soap and warm water will be a priority.

At the current time, no visitors will be permitted into school where they may come into contact with pupils. The school will be cleaned in line with Welsh Government guidance and the contract provider's daily schedule will be signed-off by the Premises Manager each day.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): Protocols for the wearing of appropriate PPE by staff are fully embedded as normal practice and are in-line with the operational guidance. Pupils are not required to wear face coverings at the current time. Parents must continue to wear face coverings at all times at the perimeter railings and the 'Drop and Go, Collect and Leave' protocol must be swift and fully adhered to.

The 'Practical Bits'

Uniform: In order for all the pupils to begin feeling like they are part of a school community again, school uniform must be worn by all pupils. Currently, we recognise that some pupils may have outgrown items of their school uniform and the purchase of new items is not permitted by Welsh Government. A flexible approach will be applied to all year groups until further notice.

Staggered Start and Finish Times: The use of gates each morning essentially remains as it was during the Autumn Term; please read the document attached carefully as a reminder; **'MPPS Operational Guidance for Parents'**.

Snacks and Lunches: All pupils at school will need to bring in their own water bottles **containing water only**, a fruit snack and lunch in a sealed container. Please ensure that younger children have food items that are easy for them to open independently. **'Hot Box Lunches'** will be available to order from Monday 8th March via **ParentPay** in preparation for week commencing 15th March, should you wish to do so. If your child is eligible for **free school meals**, they will access their daily free meal in school; you will need to order via ParentPay during next week, in preparation for your child returning to school. The supermarket voucher scheme will continue during the Easter break.

Illness: If your child, or someone in your household, becomes symptomatic, you must follow self-isolation protocols. It is very important that if your child is showing any symptoms of Covid 19, that they stay at home and you follow WG guidance; please notify the school immediately. If a pupil becomes ill with

symptoms of Coronavirus whilst at school; there is a designated Isolation Room and you will be contacted immediately to collect them. In the event of a pupil becoming unwell with any of the usual childhood illnesses, normal medical procedures apply.

The Learning

Regroup, Reconnect and Review: As the children return to school, our focus as always, is on their wellbeing and determining their readiness to engage; we call this '**Regroup**'. As part of this we observe their '**Reconnect**' with their peers and the staff within their 'Bubbles' and respond with the provision or support we feel they require, having been away from the classroom for a second prolonged period. At this point, we '**Review**' how each child is progressing through Regroup and Reconnect with the aim of getting them back into the more familiar pace of learning and much wider experiences that require skills of independence, co-operation and collaboration.

This will be a continuous cycle for each individual pupil throughout the remainder of the Spring and Summer Terms until all our pupils are content at school and progressing well through their learning. Many of our pupils in the Foundation Phase are back at school, brimming with smiles and confidence; happy to engage in learning at usual pace from the offset. Whilst this is extremely encouraging, we cannot just assume that upon return to school, every child will settle back in immediately. We therefore have to be prepared to support individual emotional and behavioural needs, particularly as KS2 where they have now been based at home for an inordinate amount of time.

You have my assurance that whilst at school, the pupils are surrounded by positivity; we are using positive language and focussing on what we have been enjoying with our families and the things that we are thankful for. Whilst we recognise that learning has been very different over the last year and that some children's learning might have been impacted, we are keen to step away from the negativity being promoted by some media as schools begin to increase attendance more widely. It will do our children's wellbeing, optimism and ambition no good whatsoever if we allow them to feel like 'the lost generation'.

Thank you for taking the time to read this document; I hope you have found it useful. In the event you feel your concern or question has not been addressed within the contents, do not hesitate to contact the school via email: malpaspark.primary@newport.gov.uk.

I am very much looking forward to seeing all our pupils back at school from 15th March, even though we are still unable to come together in a larger group, this is definitely an event to be celebrated in our 'Bubbles' and during our online 'meets' within school.

Take care everyone.

Kind regards,

Kate Guest