

Alway Primary School

This information is not intended to answer every question but to answer questions that have been asked in the main

Return to school – Frequently Asked Questions – Autumn 2020

The following answers are taken from Welsh Government guidance documents, Newport Local Authority Risk Assessments and guidance and both Alway Primary risk assessment and proposals for preparation to re-open schools with full occupancy.

When will Alway open for more pupils?

Along with other schools in Wales, we will start the phase of full opening for Reception – Year 6 pupils from Thursday 3rd September.

New Nursery and Reception pupils will have their start dates already. Please contact school if you are unsure about the date for your child.

How will school re-opening work?

Year groups will be split into cohorts (i.e. their classes) with staggered starts, and staggered end times. All pupils will be able to attend every day.

Pupils will remain in their class group, providing secure dedicated time with teachers and classmates. They will not have prolonged contact with other groups.

Pupils will have a broad and balanced curriculum. They will have dedicated outdoor time, which will be physical development and fun sessions, giving them a chance to take exercise. There will be brief breaks during sessions which will allow pupils to eat lunch or snacks. For the first two weeks, pupils will eat lunch in their classrooms, but this will be reviewed. They will be able to go to the toilet and this will be in a way that maintains social distancing as groups will not be in toilets together. Staff will supervise a regular hand washing routine on arrival and before and after changes of activity. Hygiene will be taught in an age-appropriate way. This will also be true of social distancing. From experience in July, pupils quickly get used to these routines quickly and the atmosphere will be caring and supportive throughout.

Why has the Welsh Government made this decision?

Since the decision to close schools for statutory provision, our understanding of the virus and its longer-term impacts has continued to develop. We know that we are going to

have to live with it for some time and that it will remain our biggest challenge for the foreseeable future.

For parents and teachers too this is an important opportunity for everyone to experience and be confident of the safety measures in place. The safety of staff and learners is paramount. Schools have put many safety and hygiene processes in place since June. These will continue.

Will clinically vulnerable staff or learners be expected to return to school?

In the context of COVID-19, Clinically Vulnerable individuals are at greater than average risk from COVID-19. This category includes those who are pregnant and those who have a range of chronic health conditions. Pregnant women are specifically advised to work from home after 28 weeks' gestation.

The requirement to shield has changed during the break and very few pupils would need to stay home for this reason now.

In the case of learners with additional needs, we will discuss individual circumstances with parents where appropriate.

Will parents be fined if they do not send their child to school?

During this time parents **won't be fined but Welsh Government are keeping this under review**. Children will **continue to be supported by their schools** in different ways.

Test Trace Protect

The Test, Trace, Protect strategy published on 13 May was implemented across Wales from 1 June and will be a critical factor in supporting the increase in operations of schools.

This strategy sets out the next phase of Welsh Government's approach to tackling coronavirus; testing people with symptoms in the community, tracing those who have come into close contact with people who have tested positive for coronavirus, and protecting family, friends and our community by self-isolating. We will keep records of staff and visitors on site and registers will support any need to identify contacts. For this reason, it is essential that you notify school of the reasons for absence or if your child or any household member is displaying symptoms of possible Covid-19.

Staff, learners and parents with possible symptoms must self-isolate, arrange a test as soon as possible and notify us of this, along with the outcome of the test.

Existing hubs provision

There will no longer be hub provision as school is open for all pupils.

Are school staff expected to be providing face to face and remote learning?

Distance learning will continue alongside school sessions for pupils who have to stay at home for a period of self-isolating.

What about wearing school uniform?

Pupils should wear school uniform to school as usual. However, pupils will not need PE kit until further notice but will be asked to come to school in joggers, trainers and t-shirts on designated PE days. These can be washed at home that evening.

Will pupils need to bring food and drink to school?

Whilst we ask that pupils do not bring unnecessary personal possessions to school, they will need a packed lunch and a water bottle. Free school meals **will** be provided and will take the form of a cold packed lunch initially. Food will not be shared. Therefore, pupils will need only a healthy packed lunch, a piece of fruit for snack and a bottle of water. They will bring all containers home for washing at the end of their session.

This will be reviewed early in the term as we plan to be able to serve lunches to more pupils as soon as possible.

Will staff or pupils need PPE (personal protective equipment)?

Staff will only need to use PPE if a pupil shows signs of having Covid-19 or there is bodily fluid spillage (as normal). Anyone showing signs of Covid-19 will wait in a dedicated isolation room and their parent will be contacted. We will then follow our medical advice, which is in our risk assessment and supervising staff will wear PPE. Staff will not need to wear masks other than when dealing with medical issues. Pupils do not need to wear PPE to school.

What if my child has additional needs, including medical needs?

If your child has a healthcare plan, we will get in touch with you to amend this if needed before your child returns to school. This will include how we will manage any physical needs safely and effectively.

If a pupil finds it difficult to manage the return to school, we will discuss this with you and agree how we can support your child. It is important to understand that staff are working differently but they will certainly give your child the support they need.

What if my child finds the new environment and changes to school unsettling?

In July, nearly 70% of pupils attended and nearly all enjoyed being in school again. In school, most things will still be familiar to your child and they will be warmly welcomed by staff and their peers. Although some things will be a bit different, they will have attention, support and encouragement. Classrooms will be welcoming. In the foundation phase, they will not look very different with pupils still learning through play. In key stage 2, pupils will sit facing front rather than in groups.

What about hygiene?

School will be cleaned more than usual and equipment will be cleaned after use as well as at the end/ start of the day. During the school day, regular cleaning of toilets will take

place. Pupils will wash their hands often and regularly and learn about good hygiene in a child-friendly way.

We teach pupils to 'catch it, bin it, kill it' and have separate lidded bins for tissues.

You can also reinforce good hygiene at home by reminding your child to wash their hands, use a tissue, not touch others etc.

Will my child be with their friends?

Class groups will not be rearranged or mixed together. This reduces risk and helps with contact tracing. Pupils will be in their class with friends and others they know.

Why are there different timings to the school day?

We are staggering school times for several reasons. Different arrival times and finish times will support social distancing and we would ask you to stick to these times and to use the allocated entrances. There will be signage around the site and in school to remind us all about social distancing.

Breaks/ lunch will take place in classrooms at first but this will be reviewed after the first two weeks. There will be cleaning after eating and further cleaning at the end of the day. Staff will wipe down equipment after use.

Breaks will be taken in classes or in designated outdoor areas and there will be plenty of time planned for pupils to do activities linked to relaxation and wellbeing, such as mindfulness, yoga, reflection and learning through games or outdoors. These activities, along with dedicated curriculum sessions, will give pupils a rounded, stimulating and enjoyable experience.

Other changes

All risk assessments and plans are regularly reviewed. We are guided by local authority health and safety guidance and Welsh Government advice and directions. Where things change, we will keep you updated.