



Pontypridd High School School Re-opening Plans June, 2020

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

We will be updating this document on a frequent basis as new questions arise in order to address queries from parents, carers, students, staff and the community regarding COVID-19 and the reopening of our school.

1. When will schools in Wales open for students ?

Schools will be opening on Monday, June 29th. It is proposed that the summer term will be extended by a week, therefore ending on Friday, July 24th.

2. Is attendance to School compulsory over the four weeks from June 29th ?

No. It is completely the choice of the parent/carers. There will be no sanction in any form for non-attendance to school over this period.

3. Why aren't all the children coming back ?

The Welsh Government has based this decision on the need to reduce the rate of transmission of the virus. They have taken account of the need to reduce numbers returning as a gradual process so smaller groupings in classes can be maintained.

4. If one of my children is eligible to return can't their sibling come back too ?

Sadly, the answer to this is 'no'. Siblings cannot attend unless you have secured a place in the 'childcare' provision relating to essential workers or vulnerable children.

5. Does my child have to attend ?

No one with coronavirus symptoms should attend for any reason. All children in the selected groups are encouraged to attend unless self-isolating or shielding. Parents or carers will not be fined for non-attendance at this time and schools will not be held to account for attendance levels.

6. Will all school buildings be used ?

We will be grouping the children into 3 'Learning zones' or 'bubbles' around our school. We will be using the classroom spaces that we already have and adapting them to allow for social distancing. Each zone will have its own entrance and exit points plus its own recreation / outdoor space. There will be no movement between zones once children are in school.

7. Will my child be allowed to go to the toilet during the day ?

Yes they will, but they must follow the procedures explained to them at the start of the day (such as following the one way system, social distancing, washing of hands).

If a child wishes to go to the toilet, they will go to the nearest toilet in their learning zone.

No more than one child can be in a toilet at one time. Every child must wash their hands thoroughly.

8. How many days can my child go to school?

Vulnerable children and the children of essential workers will continue to have access to school five days a week. These places must be secured through the Local Authority application process.

All Year 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12 students will have the option to attend school for one day a week, with home learning supplementing this provision. The day that is allocated to each year group / student is non-negotiable. The days are as follows:

Monday – Year 10 plus vulnerable children and those of essential workers

Tuesday – Year 9 plus vulnerable children and those of essential workers

Wednesday – Year 8 plus vulnerable children and those of essential workers

Thursday – Year 7 plus vulnerable children and those of essential workers

Friday – Year 12 plus vulnerable children and those of essential workers

9. What about the emergency 'Childcare Hubs' ?

From June 15th emergency childcare weekend provision will cease and hub provision will be provided between 8:00 to 17:00 on a daily basis. From Monday, June 29th childcare will be delivered in schools between the hours of 8:00 and 17:00 for essential workers and core hours for vulnerable learners. This childcare provision will be covered by our own staff.

Only Rhondda Cynon Taf residents can access childcare in the County Borough, and children requiring access to childcare will receive this in their home school only. There will be no expectation for headteachers to make childcare provision for school staff in their own school, unless the child is on roll at the school.

10. Who are vulnerable learners ?

- Children on the child protection register;
- Children in need of care and support with an allocated social worker
- Looked after children;
- Young carers;
- Children on the edge of care;
- Children with additional learning needs/disabilities.

11. Who are essential workers ?

- Health and social care;
- Education and childcare;
- Key public services;
- Local and national government;
- Food and other necessary goods;
- Public safety and national security;
- Transport; and
- Utilities, communication and financial services.

12. What will happen to this childcare arrangement in the summer holiday ?

The expectations beyond the summer term will be confirmed by the LA in due course. There is no expectation that schools continue hubs provision during the summer holidays. Local authorities may make alternative provision but it is not expected that this will be managed by school staff.

13. What about Sixth form consortiums between different schools ?

In order to avoid infection transmission, post 16 consortia arrangements and secondary transition visits to secondary school sites will not take place in this 4 week period. Instead, students will access their own schools and have directed learning from their teachers.

14. What will class sizes be like ?

Class sizes will be limited in order to ensure there is sufficient space to adhere to 2 metres social distancing. This will also be sufficiently small to provide secure dedicated time with teaching staff.

15. How will this be managed at Pontypridd High ?

In our planning we will fix groups of children into one of 3 learning zones or bubbles. In doing this we can:

- avoid multiple groups of learners sharing the same space without cleaning;
- avoid multiple groups of learners from interacting or having the opportunity to mix to avoid increasing the risk of transmission between groups;

16. Will School transport be available when the school reopens ?

Yes it will be.

However, due to social distancing the capacity on each bus will be reduced by 80% so that a standard coach may now have a maximum of 10 to 12 students. As a school we will be making every effort to arrange each day so that students can access school transport even with much fewer seats available.

It is advisable that wherever possible parents/carers access school transport only if they have no other alternative.

Transport will run on existing routes every school day to avoid major re-scheduling. We will be instructing people to arrive at staggered times to allow walkers, parental transport and those on school transport to arrive/depart separately.

17. How clean are the buses ?

Transport providers, as far as possible, will follow hygiene rules and will try to keep social distance from their passengers. Measures such as cordoning off seats will be undertaken to help passengers spread out. Children are expected to adhere to these rules and there will be clear sanctions applied where behaviour is unacceptable.

18. What will learning be like ?

There will be much smaller classes, providing secure dedicated time with teachers and classmates. This time will include online and personalised classroom experience and getting children and teachers ready for September.

What about 'Shielding' and 'Vulnerability' ?

19. I am a parent / carer who is shielding. Do I send my child / children back to school at the end of June ?

If you are a shielding parent or carer, there is no expectation to send your child / children back to school at the end of June. Parents or carers will not be fined for keeping their child / children at home. These children will continue to be supported by their schools in different ways.

20. My child is shielding. Will they have to return to school at the end of June?

If your child is shielding they should not return to school at the end of June or use the opportunity of these check-in sessions. We will continue to support any child who is shielded through our wellbeing calls and home learning programme.

21. What if my child (or a member of staff) is 'clinically vulnerable'?

'Extremely vulnerable' or shielding staff or learners

"Shielding" means protecting those people who are extremely vulnerable to the serious complications of coronavirus because they have a particular existing health condition. This includes children, who are extremely vulnerable and at high risk of developing serious illness if they are exposed to COVID-19 because they have a particular serious underlying health condition. These individuals will have received a shielding letter from the Chief Medical Officer. Children in this category **must not** attend school and will instead be supported to work or learn from home.

Further information can be found at:

<https://gov.wales/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-people-defined-on-medical-grounds-as-extremely-vulnerable-from-coronavirus-covid-19-html#section-38728>

22. 'Clinically vulnerable' staff or learners

Clinically vulnerable individuals are at greater than average risk from COVID 19. This category includes people aged over 70, 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.

People in this category can go out to work but they should work from home if possible. If staff or learners do attend, we will ensure that extra care is taken to ensure vulnerable individuals, and those around them adhere to strict social distancing guidelines. In the case of students, we would only expect these to attend where parents / carers consent to this.

If in doubt about whether their health condition means they should be shielding, staff, parents and carers should take advice from their GP or hospital doctor. As a school we will work with the local authority in clarifying queries relating to staff attendance.

23. What if I am living with a shielding or vulnerable person

If a staff member lives in a household with someone who is vulnerable or extremely vulnerable (in receipt of a shielding letter), they should return to work and adhere to social distancing principles. Similarly, children living with a shielding or vulnerable person who are unable to comply with social distancing

requirements are not expected to attend school and we will support them through our wellbeing calls and home learning programme.

What about Testing ?

24. Will all education staff and learners be tested for COVID-19?

All symptomatic members of the public, including critical workers and children, are now able to book tests for coronavirus.

25. Will all education staff be eligible for the antibody test?

Education staff working in the childcare hubs will be a priority group in the new antibody testing programme.

26. Test Trace Protect

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

27. What does this strategy mean ?

This strategy is about 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.

In the event of a positive test, a contact tracer will contact the person tested to help identify potential contacts. A second contact tracer will then get in touch with those contacts and advise them to self-isolate for 14 days from their last contact with the person who tested positive. These people will only be required to take a test if they develop symptoms.

People are considered as potential contacts if they were in contact with the person who has tested positive during a period beginning up to two days before symptom onset and ending when the case entered home isolation. This is based on current understanding of the main period of infectivity.

A contact is defined as someone who has had close contact during this period, specifically:

- within one metre of the person who has tested positive and has been coughed on, had a face-to-face conversation, had skin-to-skin physical contact, or been in other forms of contact within one metre for one minute or longer;
- within two metres of the person testing positive for more than 15 minutes have travelled in a vehicle with the person who has tested positive.

28. Will children and young people be eligible for testing for the virus?

The government advice on this is:

When settings open to the wider cohort of children and young people, all those children and young people eligible to attend, and members of their households, will have access to testing if they display symptoms of coronavirus. This will enable them to get back into childcare or education, and their parents or carers to get back to work, if the test proves to be negative.

To access testing parents will be able to use the 111 online coronavirus service if their child is 5 or over. Parents will be able to call 111 if their child is aged under 5.

What about Covid-19 and school reopening ?

29. What if someone shows signs of the symptoms of coronavirus ?

Under no circumstances should your child(ren) or staff attend our School if they:

- feel unwell, have any of the three identified COVID-19 symptoms (a new continuous cough, a high temperature or loss of taste or smell) or they have tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 14 days;
- live in a household with someone who has symptoms of COVID-19; or
- have tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 14 days.

30. What if someone in school shows symptoms ?

Anyone in school showing symptoms will be kept separate until they can be collected and taken home. They will wait in a separate room, supervised at a distance of two metres. If they need clinical advice, they (or a member of staff or their parent/carer) should go online to **111 Wales** (or call 111 if they don't have internet access). We will have two rooms set up as isolation rooms should we need to isolate a member of staff or student. They will remain in this room until they are able to leave the school site.

Surfaces that learners or staff with symptoms have come into contact with will be carefully cleaned.

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

31. How will the school manage a situation where someone has shown the symptoms of Covid-19 ?

Once someone with symptoms has been identified all areas where this person has been in our school will be identified and kept clear. Senior staff will ensure that the area will be cordoned off; i.e. barriers with suitable signage or behind locked doors. An immediate clean down will take place before reoccupation following the following guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-10-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-10-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

We will pay particular attention to any specific area where the person has been in contact with, i.e. allocated desk as well as all other 'high-touch' areas. If any waste is suspected of being in contact with someone showing symptoms of COVID-19, it will be placed in a waste bag, held in a secure place for 72 hours then disposed of with other waste.

Cleaning staff will fully understand the cleaning requirements, and we will work with our cleaning contractor to ensure that cleaning staff have appropriate training, products and equipment available to them in a timely manner.

32 .What actions will the school take if there is a confirmed case of Covid-19 ?

Following a confirmed case, all areas known to have been accessed will be quarantined until it can be confirmed that a deep clean has been completed (this will be dependent on when the setting was last accessed by the confirmed case). The area will be cordoned off; i.e. barriers with suitable signage or behind locked doors. A deep clean can consist of an intense general clean followed by a clean down with disinfectant or an approved vapour or ozone decontamination system.

32. How can you stop anyone with COVID-19 coming into school?

As it is possible for someone with COVID-19 to be asymptomatic (meaning they are not showing any signs or symptoms of having the virus), we cannot **guarantee** that no one with the virus comes into school.

However, as you can see from the measures outlined throughout and our responses to these FAQs we are doing everything possible to limit the number of people/staff on the premises while students are in school.

33. What other actions are you doing to reduce the risks of COVID-19 within school ?

Throughout these FAQs, we have outlined some of the measures we are implementing to reduce the risks of the virus spreading at our school. These measures include, but are not limited to:

- Reducing the number of students in school at any one time
- Carrying out a deep clean of the entire school every evening, followed by a constant clean throughout the day and an enhanced clean each morning.
- Allocating arrival and departure times for students to minimise the number of people on the school site at any one time.
- Providing each zone or 'bubble' with its own hygiene equipment.
- Instigating social distancing measures throughout the school.

34. What can I do to reduce the risks of catching COVID-19?

Please continue to follow government and Public Health Wales guidelines regarding frequent hand washing and social distancing, and remain aware of potential symptoms of the virus.

What about hygiene and cleaning the school ?

35. How will you ensure standards of hygiene at school ?

There are important actions we can all take during the coronavirus outbreak, to help prevent the spread of the virus.

We will:

- use the [COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings guidance](#) to inform our school specific risk assessments.
- ensure that sufficient handwashing facilities are available. Hand sanitiser will be available in areas without frequent access points to soap and water.
- clean surfaces that children are touching, such as desks, chairs, doors, sinks, toilets, light switches, more regularly than normal

- ensure that lidded bins for tissues are emptied throughout the day
- where possible, ensure spaces are well ventilated.
- prop doors open, where safe to do so (bearing in mind fire safety and safeguarding), to limit use of door handles and aid ventilation

We will ensure that all staff and students:

- frequently wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds and dry thoroughly.
- clean their hands on arrival at school, before and after eating, and after sneezing or coughing
- are encouraged not to touch their mouth, eyes and nose
- use a tissue or elbow to cough or sneeze and use bins for tissue waste ('catch it, bin it, kill it')
- ensure that help is available for children who have trouble cleaning their hands independently

36. What are the arrangements for cleaning the school ?

The school will be cleaned regularly and at least once a day. Hard surfaces will be cleaned with warm soapy water and then disinfected with the cleaning products normally used. Particular attention will be given to clean 'high-touch' areas and surfaces, which will be cleaned at least once a day and more frequently in high use areas based on local assessment, including toilets, railings, tables, equipment and door handles. The handling of objects between individuals, including staff, parents/carers and students, will be minimised. We will restrict the handling of objects by multiple individuals.

Tissues will be placed in a separate waste bin and disposed of safely. All rubbish will be removed daily. Used antibacterial surface wipes will also be placed in a separate waste bin and disposed of safely.

37. Will you have additional cleaning ?

Additional cleaning hours will be commissioned working with the LA. The frequency and effectiveness of daily cleaning will be reviewed and adjusted as necessary.

38. Will the school be ensuring there are risk assessments ?

Yes.

Staff and the governing body will ensure that ensuring that relevant risk assessments are undertaken, and control measures are implemented and monitored to ensure that they are effective.

Risk assessments that already exist for learners with more complex needs will be updated.

39. What about Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The school will follow Public Health Wales guidance on PPE. It is important to remember that physical distancing, hand hygiene and respiratory hygiene (catching a cough or sneeze in a tissue or covering the mouth and nose with an elbow or sleeve) remain strongly evidenced to be the most effective ways to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

40. What about face coverings ?

The Chief Medical Officer has been clear that there is no evidence to support the widespread wearing of non-medical face coverings in the community. Non-medical face coverings are recommended where social distancing cannot be maintained.

We will not require staff or students to wear face coverings (please see exceptions below). Evidence suggests that changing habits, social distancing, cleaning and hygiene are effective measures in controlling the spread of the virus.

Face coverings (or any form of medical mask where instructed to be used for specific clinical reasons) should not be worn in any circumstance by those who may not be able to handle them as directed (for example, young children, or those with special educational needs or disabilities) as it may inadvertently increase the risk of transmission.

The majority of staff will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work, even if they are not always able to maintain a distance of 2 metres from others. PPE is only needed in a very small number of cases including:

- Children whose care routinely already involves the use of PPE due to their intimate care needs should continue to receive their care in the same way;
- If a child becomes unwell with symptoms of coronavirus while in school and needs direct personal care until they can return home, the staff supervising should wear a fluid-resistant surgical face mask if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained. If contact with the child or young person is necessary, then disposable gloves, a disposable apron and a fluid-resistant surgical face mask should be worn. If a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes, for example from coughing, spitting, or vomiting, then eye protection should also be worn.

41. Can staff or students wear a mask ?

Staff or students may decide to wear a mask to school and this will be accepted and respected. The school or LA is not responsible for purchasing and supplying such PPE and is not responsible for the quality of such PPE

42. What about social distancing ?

Social distancing practices will be embedded. Staff will pay due regard to the guidance on social distancing as specified under the Coronavirus Regulations. Adhering to this will ensure that staff and our children are safe and well, and will help ensure that the chain of infection is broken.

We will ensure that policies reinforce the importance of social distancing and that practice mitigates risks for learners and staff. This would include our positive relationships / behaviour policy and those relating to wellbeing and healthcare. These expectations will be shared with you.

On arrival and departure from the school ?

We will set times for arrival and departure from school to ensure 'groups' of students, staff and parents/carers cannot form anywhere. We will also have different entry and exit points for staff and students into and from school buildings.

Inside school buildings and classrooms ?

School corridors will have one way systems and this will be clearly signposted. All classrooms will be arranged so that the maximum number in that room at any one time does not exceed social distancing regulations. We will timetable each day so that the same staff interact with the same group of learners each week.

At break times ?

Each learning zone will have its own outdoor spaces for recreation and we will also cater for the students inside buildings in inclement weather. These spaces will be supervised at all times to ensure social distancing is respected.

43. Will my child be able to buy food in the canteen ?

No they will not. No food can be bought in school canteens during this period. If your child is not in receipt of free school meals then they will need to bring a packed lunch to school and a suitable drink. Water bottles will be refilled as required. We also ask that, wherever possible, you send food in **disposable packaging or containers**, as **all packaging and containers will be disposed of** to avoid any risk of contamination.

44. What about BACS payments ?

BACS payments will continue to be made for e-FSM learners and a 'grab and go' lunch will be provided at lunchtime

45. Where will my child eat their food during lunch ?

Students will be able to eat their packed lunch either in their designated classroom space or in carefully managed outdoor areas to minimise any risk of cross-contamination. Once they have finished eating all food debris, wrapping, and waste will be placed in a bin bag, which will be tied and disposed of.

What about when my child is in class ?

46. How big will the classes be?

In order to maintain strict social distancing regulations our classrooms will have a maximum of 10 students at any one time. In some classrooms the figure will be lower than this.

47. How can you guarantee that social distancing takes place in the classroom ?

Once in class in the morning students will remain in the same room. Each room has been arranged so that children can sit 2 metres apart.

48. What will classroom learning look like ?

In agreeing for your child to return to school in one of the designated year groups, it is important to realise that what might be considered 'usual' learning is unlikely to happen immediately.

We have made this decision in recognition that students have not been in school for many weeks and there will be a need to re-establish social and learning behaviours and ways of working before we can even consider teaching a more formal curriculum.

Indeed, it is very likely that before a more formal curriculum can be delivered, a degree of informal assessment will be required to identify the learning gaps that students have developed while spending such a long time away from school. These learning gaps may be counteracted by:

- Revisiting areas covered before our school was closed in March
- Re-establishing previously learned concepts and understandings.
- Assessing what students have learned and developed through distance learning.
- Prioritising key learning needs ready for the next academic year.

49. Will my child be taught by their usual teacher?

Not necessarily though lessons will be planned by them. Because it is impossible for one teacher to now cover all of the class at one time, staff will be working with colleagues so they can deliver and support your child through the same learning, using the same resources. All teachers will be from our school.

50. My child has ALN. Will they get the one-to-one support they usually do ?

We will be inviting groups of children into school each day in relation to Year groups. A team of ALN staff will be in school to provide the wellbeing support your child needs and also help them with issues which may have arisen through school closure and our home learning programme.

It is our intention to plan each day so that key staff your child is used to working with will be in school but we cannot guarantee this on all occasions. Staff will be contacting homes to plan each day and it is intended that you will be fully aware of what each day will include and who will deliver that and support your child.

51. Will my child be expected to share resources, such as pens and pencils?

Children should bring all of their own equipment into school. They will not be allowed to share anything such as pens or pencils. A basic pencil case with equipment will be issued to anyone who requires it. This will be named and remain in school for use by the same child the next time they attend.

Laptops and I-pads that are shared will be cleaned with an anti-bacterial wipe after use. With this type of equipment, we cannot say that some resources will not be handled by more than one child during the same week.

52. Will the school have assembly /acts of worship ?

Each class will have a set time in the day when they will have the opportunity for reflection, but there will be no mass gatherings or daily acts of worship as a school for the time being.

53. Will my child need to wear a school uniform?

We would like all students attending to wear school uniform though we understand that in some instances this may not be possible. We will accept children dressed in their PE kit as part of our uniform. Please contact us if you want to discuss anything related to appropriate uniform.

We advise that children come to school in fresh clothing each day they are asked to attend.

54. How are you managing the behaviour of students?

Due to the risks posed by COVID-19, our expectations for behaviour is of the highest importance. We will expect everyone to show respect for all the new guidelines and our school policy will be amended accordingly. We do not anticipate any issues but where behaviour is below that expected it will not be tolerated.

In such a case parents / carers will be contacted and the student will be asked to leave the school site. Actions that could be considered grounds for removal include threatening to or actually spitting, coughing in the direction of another student or member of staff, or invading the personal space of another student or member of staff.

In the event that this behaviour occurs, the student's parents / carers will be called and the student will be excluded for a minimum of 4 days, subject to a case review by senior staff and the school's governing body.

As always, though, our intent is for students to be happy, content, and relaxed while in school, and we will continue working hard to ensure this remains the case.

55. Will we allow visitors and volunteers into school?

No until the situation improves. We want to minimise additional adults coming in and out of school.

56. Will extra-curricular clubs run (football club, dance club etc)?

No. These bring too many children into contact and mix the school groupings.

57. Will you continue to provide online home learning activities for children who do not return to school?

We will continue to set home learning activities during term-time so that all children have access to provision to support their learning. These activities will in the main be what the children in school are accessing.

58. Will there be any trips once school opens on June 29th ?

No. There are no plans to take the children out of the school grounds until further notice.

59. What happens if I change my mind about my child attending school?

If you have confirmed your child will be attending school, but you decide that you no longer wish your child to attend school, you must inform the school immediately.

If you have confirmed your child will not be attending school, but you decide that you wish them to attend school, you must inform the school as soon as is possible.

60. Can my child come to school even if they aren't in one of the selected year groups?

No, they cannot, unless you are a key worker or they are a vulnerable child. The school will only be open to students on the days stated for each pupil. Vulnerable children, and the children of key workers can request a childcare place in the school through the LA's website.

If you send your child to the school without informing us they will be asked to return home.

61. Will there be any transition activities for Year 6 pupils over the 4 weeks?

The Local Authority has stated that there must be no movement of children between schools. As such Year 6 will not be able to visit Pontypridd High in these 4 weeks.

We will continue to keep contact with you virtually and aim to include more transition time on our return in September. Fortunately many of the children have undertaken a lot of transition work in Year 5 and also in the Autumn of Year 6.

62. As a parent / carer, what can I do to support the school at this time ?

As a parent or carer, we would ask that you help us by completing online surveys as we issue them in order that we can prepare, and maintain a happy and safe school environment. Also:

- inform the school in good time should your child not be able to attend on a particular day.

- To understand that the day for attendance will be allocated to your child and that for safety reasons that day is non-negotiable.
- To adhere to and reinforce the government guidelines for social distancing at all times outside of the school premises and to ensure that your child understands how they must do this in school

63. What will school look like in September?

We will follow all government, LA and health guidance to ensure the safety of our pupils and staff. Therefore as things stand it is very difficult to say what the school will like in September, although we would hope to be in a position to expand the provision from what we are providing for these four weeks. This will only be where the safety of all can be managed and assured.

64. Where should I go if I have more questions?

If, having read the FAQs you are still unable to find an answer to your question, please contact the school through email on contact@pontyhigh.co.uk and we will make every effort to answer your query.

Pontypridd High School

FAQs

June 2020