11th February 2021

PHASED REOPENING OF SCHOOLS FOR FOUNDATION PHASE LEARNERS

Schools are planning for the phased reopening of on-site provision for Foundation Phase learners in the week beginning 22nd February.

Schools are currently revising their risk assessments following the release of Welsh Government revised operational guidance.

The revised guidance to schools includes new detail on:

- wearing of face coverings by staff in all areas of the school or setting where social distancing cannot be maintained
- risk assessments – recognising the importance of reviewing risk assessments to suit the current circumstances and supporting checklist
- availability of twice weekly testing for staff in schools and
- workforce – including advice for those who are extremely clinically vulnerable
- free school meals – the continuation of £19.50 per learner.

On Monday 22nd February all schools will be undertaking a planning day for the return.

The provision for key worker and vulnerable children will continue that day.

From Tuesday 23rd February schools will begin a phased return for learners in the Foundation Phase.

This return is being locally determined by clusters of schools to enable them to ensure that the return to school is as safe as possible for learners.

Further detail for each school can be found by accessing school websites and social media platforms.

The return to schools will be phased so that each group of learners entering school settings is familiarised with the range of measures to keep them safe.

Therefore, in the first week of the return to school numbers on school sites will be lower.

Distance learning for Foundation Phase learners will cease in this week to enable school staff to spend quality face to face time returning to schools.

During the first week of the return schools will be monitoring and evaluating their procedures as learners return to school sites.

There will also be monitoring to see if there is any increased transmission of the virus resulting from the return to school sites.

School staff will be undertaking lateral flow device testing on a twice weekly basis.

This means that there may be instances where the return to full capacity may be halted or slowed to ensure that all mitigation measures are working.

Parents and carers will have a role to play in ensuring that the mitigating measures in the guidance are supported. They include:

- Maintaining social distancing on school sites wherever possible
- Wearing face coverings on all school sites
- Ensuring that learners are not mixing outside their designated school bubbles.
- Continuing to follow the Welsh Government Guidance at Alert level four which means staying at home unless it is essential to go out.

Learners who are extremely clinically vulnerable should remain at home in line with current guidance which remains in place until the 31st March 2021.

Schools are preparing for a full return of all Foundation Phase learners on 1st March.

For the latest advice and press releases relating to coronavirus, please view: www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/coronavirus

For press queries, please email:
presspublicrelations@pembrokeshire.gov.uk