

West Pennard Church of England Primary School

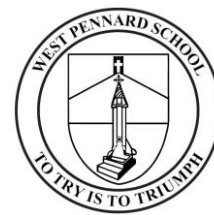


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04.09.20

Dear Parents / Carers,

I thought it timely to update you on the procedures and routines regarding full school opening next week in light of changes to government guidelines during August. The bulk of this letter remains the same as my letter of 15th July. Any changes that are pertinent to you I have coloured **purple**. Key points remain in **red**. I have altered the 'handy fridge-friendly summary' also on the final page so please replace the one you already have.

Teaching and Learning

The overarching principle of the guidance is to reduce the number of contacts between children and staff. It suggests that we keep the children in 'bubbles' which can be the size of a class, or even key stages (in the case of smaller schools). At West Pennard **we will maintain class bubbles**. The children will arrive in class in the morning and spend all of their time during the school day with children and adults associated with their bubble. This, of course, has implications for playtime and lunchtimes – see the later sections that refer to these specifically. In the classroom, the guidance instructs that the children can sit side by side at desks facing the front. It is acknowledged that younger children often find it hard to socially distance and measures such as seating in this way will help otherwise to support this, as will procedures we will have in place to minimise unnecessary movement around the classroom and the use of resources and furniture. As children are taught within a bubble, the stipulation of social distancing no longer applies, although physical contact will be kept to a minimum. Teachers and Teaching Assistants can supervise across bubbles, as they are able to maintain a distance between themselves and the children, as well as other adults in the school.

The return to school next week will have a multitude of challenges for most children. We are completely aware of this and will put in place as much as we can to ease children back to a degree of normality. We feel it important, however, not to guess the needs of individuals following lockdown. Some children may well have benefitted from the extra attention that working at home could have brought (in certain situations), whereas others may have found it more of a struggle. Some will have suffered socially and others emotionally. Some will be very attached to their new routine and circumstance and find it hard to say farewell next week, whereas others will be more than eager to return. We will have a patchwork of needs to assess and to address and we need to have time with the children to best plan to tackle them. I heard some very wise words during lockdown that stated that 'although we have all been in the same storm, we have been on different sized ships'. I think that this could be very relevant to our school community. **To help reassure your child and to re-acclimatise them with the school environment, I have taken pictures of the classrooms as they will find them on Monday. Please share these with them and talk them through what they will be doing on arrival.**

It has been stated by Government that all children must return to school full time next week, however, we do understand that the stamina of some for school, following many months off, will take time to build. Therefore, we have woven in lots of opportunities for calming and pastorally focused activities that will ensure the children are eased back to school, looking out for any individual difficulties, worries or challenges and addressing them as they arise. We will maintain this whilst also concerning ourselves with the need to catch-up on education lost since March. We have organised a number of specialised catch-up sessions for the children across the school and through the school week. **The Government have also created a fund for catch-up tuition. The first instalment of this additional funding is promised to arrive in November. I have already organised for a teacher to deliver this across the school, once the funding arrives.** Communication will be key this term and the teachers will have the facility set up to enable this, including 'meet the



teacher' sessions early on in the term (outside of school hours to maintain the integrity of the bubbles), to which you will be invited. **You will need to socially distance within the classroom and windows / doors will be open to maximize ventilation.** Teachers will be extremely busy though, as they have been during the lockdown, so please do adhere to the guidelines we put in place last year to only expect a response to a query inside school hours and not always on the day the query is raised.

Arrival

In the guidance there is suggestion to consider staggering the start and end of the school day, whilst also maintaining the same amount of teaching time. We feel that this would lead to a longer day when already stamina may be low for what they were used to. West Pennard is quite unique in the group of Somerset schools due to the number of children that are bussed in and also in how early we open our doors to the children and ourselves. We want to maintain this as we know how useful it can be when needing to get to work in an area of small spread-out towns and poor public transport links. We are therefore going to **continue to open to all at 8:35am** as we feel that with the numbers on the bus, the continuation of Breakfast Club (see separate section) and the timeframe to arrive, we are already providing a large window of arrival where staggering happens relatively naturally. The main change to the routine will, however, be that rather than being supervised outside on arrival, the children will go directly to classes to start catch-up sessions with the teachers. This is necessary as we need to maintain class bubbles whilst outside, as we will at playtimes, but we do not have enough staff on site to maintain this safely prior to 9:00 whilst ensuring low contact between these bubbles as children arrive. **Please understand when dropping children off at the gate that staff will not be able to assist in encouraging them into class by way of physical contact, eg holding hands.** We understand that this may be difficult when worries or anxieties about returning to school may be heightened but I am sure you will understand that we must maintain distancing between adults and children and also the integrity of the bubbles – so you will not be permitted to escort the children into class either. **Please note that registers will continue to close at 8:50 and anyone arriving after this time will be classed as late. Anyone arriving after 9:00am will have an unauthorised absence.**

New Year R intake – please accompany your child to the **tractor playground** where you will be met by the Reception Class Staff. Unfortunately, we can not welcome you into class due to current guidance, but you will be able to say farewells from there. In the first week, if your child is in the morning session, this runs until 1:00pm and includes lunch. If your child is in the afternoon session, the gate will be opened at 12:00 noon and once again please bring your child to the tractor playground for them to join with the rest of their class for lunch. Having lunch together as a single cohort bubble will enable children to get to know each other prior to whole days from 14th September.

Departure

The school **buses will depart at 3:00pm.** After the buses have left, the gates will open to parents of **Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children who can be collected from 3:00pm.** Children in **Years 3-6 will be able to be collected at 3:15pm.** For the many families that have children in both Key Stages, we ask that you collect all children at the later time of 3:15pm. The teachers will stay with children in their bubbles and will hold on to the younger children until you collect your older child.

Parents on Site

The guidance states that we must only allow parents on site by appointment. Therefore, should you need to visit the Office, you must phone to make an appointment first. **Parents are not allowed to visit classrooms to drop off children or otherwise.** I know that perhaps more than ever, following lockdown and a period for some away from school, anxieties may be heightened and attachment greater. However, we must maintain the integrity of class bubbles and the safety of the staff within them. In order to ease worries as much as we can and facilitate farewells in a safe manner, **we will have a one-way system that operates for drop off and pick up.** You can enter the school via the pedestrian gate and exit via the vehicle gate. Whilst you do so, and in waiting for your child, please **adhere to Government guidelines of social distancing.** The teachers will supervise their bubbles and send your child to you when they see you. We anticipate we will be able to welcome you to the site outside of school hours to pre-arranged events such as the September 'Meet the Teacher' sessions and 'Parents' Evenings' as this will not compromise the integrity of the bubbles with areas used being cleaned before the arrival of the children the next day.

When collecting from After School Club please use the 'wrap around care' intercom and do not enter the site. The staff will escort your child to meet you at the gate. If you arrive at the same time as someone else, please adhere to social distancing guidelines and wait further up the footpath towards the field before safely exiting in the direction from which you came.

Breakfast Club

We will be offering a supervision only Breakfast Club from 7:30 – 8:30am at a cost of £2 for the full session and £1.50 from 8am, as before lockdown. The children will be seated in the hall in class groupings to maintain the bubble structure that they will have in class throughout the school day. They will be escorted to their class bubble at 8:35pm as others in the school arrive.

When dropping off at Breakfast Club please use the 'wrap around care' intercom and do not enter the site. The staff will receive your child in the hall. (For new Year R children staff will collect them from the gate until they are used to arrival at this club). If you arrive at the same time as someone else, please adhere to social distancing guidelines and wait further up the footpath towards the field before safely exiting in the direction from which you came.

We will assess the take up of Breakfast Club and may have to introduce a booking system if it proves popular.

School Transport

In the guidance there is a clear distinction made between public transport and school transport. It is stated that those using school transport tend to be consistent and do not mix with the general public on their journeys to school. It is therefore asserted that they do not need to adhere to the social distancing rules that apply to public transport. However, we will need to maintain the bubble structure of the rest of the school day. Children will sit in year group bubbles.

All children should be accompanied by an adult until they get on the bus. The bus escort for the Pilton bus will see children are correctly seated and all seatbelts are on as no parents will be allowed on either the Pilton or the North Wotton bus. Please ensure there is always an adult collecting them at home drop off too. The guidance suggests the use of face coverings for children over the age of 11, so not for Primary aged children, although this is completely your prerogative should you so wish.

In order to support a staggered arrival we requested that the Pilton bus arrive early at 8:20. However as things had already been organized by County they suggested that the **Pilton bus will arrive at 8:30 and the North Wootton bus will arrive at 8:20.** On arrival children will go straight to their class bubble. The school buses will depart at 3:00 prompt.

Pupils must clean their hands before getting on the bus and again when they get off. Hand sanitiser should be used by the children before disembarking.

Lunchtimes

We have had to make changes to lunchtimes in order to maintain the bubbles and minimise contact between groups of children. **Children in Reception and Key Stage 1 will have their packed lunch in the classroom.** Rigorous routines for hand washing and cleaning of surfaces will be in place, as they were in the summer term for children in year groups we were able to welcome back. Children in these year groups are entitled to a Universal Free School Meal – the kitchen will supply their chosen packed lunch option. We will review this provision at October half term as a hot meal offering in the winter months would be preferable if we can make it work logistically whilst maintaining safety.

We are going to divide the hall in two using our hall dividers to make two distinct areas for the **provision of a hot meal option for Key Stage 2.** There will be two sittings with cleaning in between in order to maintain the maximum safety and minimise contact between bubbles.

Playtimes

As the children are entering classes earlier, we can facilitate more playtimes within the school day which will help ease the children back and aid to break up the school day. At playtime the children will play in set areas of the playground, demarcated by painted boxes, which will be large enough to facilitate most games and a happy playtime (these are being painted on Monday 7th September in temporary paint that lasts up to 3 months). We will need to stagger the playtimes of Year 1 and Year 2 children to ensure their playground is big enough for them, but the other year groups will have half a playground each. Each bubble will have an adult supervisor and children will go to the toilet one at a time, as coordinated by a walky-talky system.

Collective Worship

We will be holding 'class' collective worship this term, as we can not congregate in the hall altogether, unfortunately. We are working on the best way of informing you of successes, as we would for Star of the Week assemblies. We will be in touch about Celebration Assemblies as the new year begins.

Extra-Curricular Clubs

We have tried to offer as many extra-curricular clubs as we can as we recognise their importance to the rounded education that we provide and also the ability for you to collect later in the day. We have managed to maintain the bubbles of the school day by having **year group specific clubs** and a few where we can supervise them in two completely separate groups in a large space, such as the hall or outside – this is the case for gymnastics. We have provided four particular clubs that are geared towards developing skills that may need picking up since lockdown. We have bought in Maths on the Move which we are providing free of charge to Year 3 and Year 5 (in separate sessions) – other year groups will be targeted later in the year. TT Rockstars is offered to Year 3 and Homework / Catch-Up Club is offered to Year 6. Please make use of these free offerings.

After School Club

As for extra-curricular clubs, **we will continue to run our After School Club**. We will ensure that children are supervised in their respective year group bubbles, as they have throughout the school day. Normal charging procedures and hours apply. Our After School Club is self-funding, so please do make use of this facility so that we can maintain it into the future. The usual snacks will still be served.

Uniform

The guidance states that **uniform does not need to be washed any more frequently than normal**. Therefore we will expect to see children in full uniform every day.

Home Learning

We are directed to be ready to deliver home learning in the event of a second spike or if you are directed to be at home for clinical reasons or on the advice of Public Health England. **We have set up Google Classroom** to facilitate this and will be using it to post homework, so that we keep our skills fresh throughout the year if we need to use this facility to revert to full home schooling. Teachers will endeavour to match as closely the teaching in class as they do online, but please do appreciate the challenge that they face in doing so, in terms of time to plan lessons delivered normally in school and those replicated in addition digitally. It will not be a simple case of uploading activities or worksheets as concepts are taught verbally before they are practiced on paper and a teacher's skill is to assess a child's understanding and adjust their teaching accordingly. This will need to be done in a different way in online learning in order to closely match the learning going on in class.

In order to be ready to revert to full online learning, when / if necessary, the staff will be using Google Classroom to issue homework every week. The children will all be given a log on to their classroom and we will issue help sheets / information to support you with this during the second week of school.

Resources to and from School

Please **keep items that come into school to a minimum**. Children will require a water bottle and packed lunch (unless having ordered a school lunch). Pencil cases and resources will be provided by the school for the children's sole use. **Reading books and Planners will need to come in each day, as will book bags**. We will have a system to quarantine reading books before re-issuing them and also a system for minimising contact between individuals and books, including exercise books. We intend to email most communication rather than producing paper copies.

Attendance

The guidance states that the **normal rules of attendance apply**, including:

- parents' duty to ensure that their child attends regularly at school where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age;
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' codes of conduct

Pupils that are Shielding or Self-Isolating

In the guidance it states that the majority of pupils will be able to return to school. However it is noted that:

- a small number of pupils will still be unable to attend in line with public health advice because they are self-isolating and have had symptoms or a positive test result themselves, or because they are a close contact of someone who has coronavirus (COVID-19)
- shielding advice for all adults and children was paused on 1 August 2020 which means that even the small number of pupils who will remain on the shielded patient list can also return to school, as can those who have family members who were shielding - read the [current advice on shielding](#)

- if rates of the disease rise in local areas, children (or family members) from that area, and that area only, may be advised to shield during the period where rates remain high and, therefore, they may be temporarily unable to attend
- pupils no longer required to shield but who generally remain under the care of a specialist health professional are likely to discuss their care with their health professional at their next planned clinical appointment - you can find more advice from the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health at [COVID-19 - 'shielding' guidance for children and young people](#)

Procedures / Control Measures for a Suspected Case

Procedures Within School / Associated with Bubbles

Please **do not send your child(ren) into school if they are displaying symptoms or have tested positive in at least the last 10 days**. Children who are displaying symptoms will be isolated in the medical room and you will be called to collect them. The medical room will be deep cleaned following this, as will the associated bubble. You will need to **book a test** in this event and if there is a positive result you will have to provide details of everyone that they have been in contact with. Visit <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/> to arrange a test. In school we will maintain a record of all 'contacts' that a bubble has made during the week e.g. on a Thursday they will have different teachers leading different sessions for Enrichment. The adults teaching within schools will need to socially distance from the children in a bubble and from each other, which enables this. Please **inform us immediately of a test result**.

In the event of a positive test for Coronavirus within a bubble we will contact the local health protection team who will carry out a swift risk assessment and confirm who they have been in close contact with whilst infectious and ask them to self-isolate. The health protection team will advise on sending home those that have been in close contact with the individual and ensuring that they self-isolate for 14 days.

Close contact currently means:

- direct close contacts - face to face contact with an infected individual for any length of time, within 1 metre, including being coughed on, a face to face conversation, or unprotected physical contact (skin-to-skin)
- proximity contacts - extended close contact (within 1 to 2 metres for more than 15 minutes) with an infected individual
- travelling in a small vehicle, like a car, with an infected person

If children are sent home as they have been in contact with someone that has tested positive, other members of the household do not need to self-isolate themselves unless their child or staff member that is self-isolating starts to develop symptoms. If they start to develop symptoms you must organise a test. If the test delivers a negative result they must still self-isolate for the remainder of the 14 day period. **This differs from the guidance for a negative test result below as this scenario follows close contact with somebody with the virus, whereas below it was with suspected symptoms**. If they test positive you must notify us immediately and they must self-isolate for 10 days from the onset of their symptoms and 14 days for members of the household.

Any members of staff who have helped someone with symptoms and any pupils who have been in close contact with them do not need to go home to self-isolate unless they are instructed to do so by the health protection team (see above) or develop symptoms themselves; (in which case, they should arrange a test) or if the symptomatic person subsequently tests positive or if they have been requested to do so by NHS Test and Trace.

General procedures Associated with Testing

If someone has a coronavirus test and tests positive, they should follow the [guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#) and must continue to self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms and then return to school only if they do not have symptoms other than cough or loss of sense of smell/taste. This is because a cough or anosmia (loss of smell) can last for several weeks once the infection has gone. The 10-day period starts from the day when they first became ill. If they still have a high temperature, they should keep self-isolating until their temperature returns to normal. Other members of their household should continue self-isolating for the full 14 days.

If someone tests negative, if they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus (COVID-19), they can stop self-isolating. They could still have another virus, such as a cold or flu – in which case it is still

best to avoid contact with other people until they are better. Other members of their household can stop self-isolating.

In the event of your child(ren) having to self-isolate we will provide home learning via Google Drive and / or Google Classroom (see above)

Face Coverings

Government guidance states that face coverings should be used in schools with pupils in Year 7 and above. Although there is, by this assertion, no apparent requirement for Primary aged pupils to wear them, it will remain your prerogative if you choose to do so. If you choose to have your child wear a face covering, please could you support us in communicating with them procedures for removing and storing them correctly. These being:

- cleaning of hands before and after touching – including to remove or put them on
- the safe storage of them in individual, sealable plastic bags between use.
- Where a face covering becomes damp, it should not be worn and the face covering should be replaced carefully.
- Pupils must be instructed not to touch the front of their face covering during use or when removing it and they must dispose of temporary face coverings in a the sealable 'catch it, kill it, bin it' bins in each classroom or place reusable face coverings in a plastic bag they can take home with them, and then wash their hands again before heading to their classroom.

There is no guidance for adults in schools to have to wear face coverings other than a suggestion that they are worn in high traffic areas such as corridors, the kind of which you only find in secondary schools.

In the event of a local lockdown, all adults in school will be required to wear face coverings in areas outside the classrooms when moving around and where social distancing would be hard to maintain.

Other Considerations

We have purchased a number of additional hand sanitiser dispensers for key areas of the school and there will be a routine for their frequent use as directed by the teachers. Increased frequency for hand washing will also be put in place, as will a policy of '**catch it, kill it, bin it**' for used tissues and other unsanitary items – we have purchased a number of pedal operated closed lid bins for this specific purpose. It may be the case, as it has for some this term, that your child(ren) are particularly sensitive to the use of hand sanitiser, If this is the case, please contact the Office and we can let the teachers know and look at alternatives for hand cleanliness.

Finally, I know that the return to school will be a cause of great anxiety and worry for some of you. I hope to reassure you that sometimes the prospect of undertaking an activity for the first time or after a period of time can be of great worry, but once 'seeing it in practise' one's fears tend to allay. The greater positivity you can show in front of your child about starting school next week, the easier they and perhaps you will find it.

I intend to review all of the procedures on an ongoing basis and fully at October half term.

I would like to thank you for all that you have done to support your children during the lockdown and summer holidays and also for your continued support in our response to Government guidance. It has most certainly been a challenging time for all, and if we can work together in partnership as a school community it will undoubtedly be of greater benefit to the children in our care – the reason that we are all here and strive hard to make their learning enjoyable, purposeful and memorable.

I look forward to seeing you all at the gate next week.

Best Wishes

Tony Wheat
Headteacher



Handy Fridge Friendly Summary

1. Do not send your child in to school if they are displaying symptoms. Self-isolate for 10 days and book a test. Please inform us of the result. See <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/>
2. If your child tests positive, they must isolate for 10 days from the day they developed symptoms and the household must also for 14 days. Only return to school 10 days after first experiencing symptoms.
3. Use the one way system into school and go directly out using the vehicle gate. Do not visit classes.
4. Adhere to social distancing guidelines. Please do not mix bubbles while entering or leaving the site.
5. Uniform doesn't need to be washed any more frequently than before. Children need full uniform each day.
6. Keep items that are sent in to school to a minimum. Planners and Reading books in book bags need to come in daily. Please assist your child's ease back in to school by reading with them often.
7. The normal rules of attendance apply.
8. Arrive at school between 8:35am and 8:50am. We will receive children for supervision at Breakfast Club from 7:30am. School finishes at 3:00 for Reception and KS1 and 3:15 for Key Stage 2. If you have children in differing Key Stages, please collect at the later time.
9. When dropping off at Breakfast Club please use the intercom and do not enter the site. The staff will receive your child in the hall.
10. When picking up from After School Club please use the intercom and do not enter the site. The staff will escort your child to meet you at the gate.
11. If your child displays symptoms and tests positive, they must self isolate for 10 days from when symptoms appeared and only return to school when symptoms of a cough / loss of sense of smell / taste have ceased.
12. If your child is sent home due to suspected cases in their bubble and they receive a negative result, they still must self-isolate for 14 days as they could still develop symptoms of the Covid-19 within that time frame.