

January 2022: Specialist Classrooms

10th January Onwards

COVID-19: A Guide for students, staff and families



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Introduction

The coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to present several challenges to us and the whole education community.

It is recognised that returning to the physical school site last year, was difficult for some students and staff who will have experienced a range of challenges during the last few months. However, the whole school population has been amazing, and I would like to thank everyone for their support as we reopened the whole school.

As we move in to the New Year, the approach is continued to be underpinned by the latest understanding of the science available to Welsh Government. Therefore, should this change then the school will adapt accordingly, in line with local authority and Welsh Government advice.

The school has ensured that the latest guidance from Public Health Wales is at the core of any plans. This includes:

- a requirement that people who are unwell with symptoms of COVID-19 stay at home
- robust hand and respiratory hygiene including ventilation
- use of face coverings
- continue increased cleaning arrangements
- use of lateral flow testing
- active engagement with Test, Trace, Protect strategy
- formal consideration of how to reduce contacts and maximise physical distancing between those in school wherever possible and minimise potential for contamination so far as is reasonably practicable.

How contact between learners, learners and staff, and between staff are reduced will depend on the school's circumstances and should include:

- recording groupings of learners and their locations
- reducing indoor contact between groups as much as possible
- arranging classrooms with forward facing desks, recognising this may not be possible or appropriate in all schools/settings
- staff maintaining distance from learners and other staff as much as possible.

We will continue to make the provision safer through adherence to the published government guidelines. These include physical distancing, hygiene and self-isolation following current guidance. This will minimise the risk of transmission of infection.

As in previous planning, the decisions we have taken at school are based on what we feel is safe, practicable and directly linked to the existing scientific and medical information available. We will be working with our students and staff to reinforce the key messages of frequent handwashing and good personal hygiene and maintaining physical distancing, as far as is reasonable, as approaches to reducing the risk of infection. To reduce physical mixing, each year group will continue to use designated form zones of the school before school, form time, break and lunch.

The purpose of the guide is to explain how school will operate from January 2022 onwards. It may not address every question, but it is designed to provide clarity on how and why school will operate. I anticipate that we will need to review this as the term progresses and we will continue to reflect changes as Welsh Government assessments are made.

These changes are designed for the safety of all. Naturally, I trust families will appreciate that where a student is unable to follow these safety measures then the school will have to assess suitability of provision. I cannot emphasise enough how important it is that everyone follows the guidelines at school.

Thank you again for your support and cooperation to date, and for the coming weeks and months.



Miss C Pritchard
Interim Headteacher



Mrs M Cookson
Deputy Headteacher

Health and Safety Summary

Existing measures that will stay in place:

- There are hand sanitiser stations at every entrance and bottles in every classroom. Students will be asked to wash hands or use the sanitisers as frequently as possible.
- Staff and students should wear face coverings in all indoor areas, including classrooms, and when moving around school, such as in corridors and one-way systems outdoors (unless they are exempt).
- All vending machines will be disconnected, and students should bring their own drinks and snacks.
- Toilets will be allocated to each year group and will be cleaned on a regular basis. Students must ensure they ONLY use the toilets allocated to their year group.
- All classrooms will have desks arranged to minimise student face to face positioning/interaction.
- Staff will maintain a minimum of 2m distance from students in all classrooms unless everyone in the classroom is wearing a face covering.
- Each year group will have their own social area, and this must be adhered to outside of lesson time. Students should not wander into the social areas of other year groups.
- Staff will enforce the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' message.
- An attendance record and seating plan will be recorded every lesson to assist with Track, Trace and Protect.
- No physical contact sports should be played at either breaks or lunchtimes.
- Due to the restrictions of zoning students, we will be unable to offer canteen facilities at break time and students should bring their own snacks and drinks for the time being. There will be a reduced menu that will be offered to our students on a strictly pre-order basis for lunch, and food will be brought to the year group zones. Please see further information below regarding arrangements for ordering. However, we request, if possible, students bring their own packed lunches.
- If you require a meeting with a member of staff, please contact our school office and arrangements will be made to accommodate you. Please note due to the current high alert level this will be online.
- A clean area will be available in the school for students displaying symptoms (The medical room).
- The use of lateral flow tests for staff and students has been increased to three times a week, on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings prior to attending school.
- Handles, desks, chairs and high-touch areas will be cleaned after every lesson.
- To control the flow of students around the school we have initiated a one-way system, and this must be adhered to at all times. In a few classrooms where a one-way system is not possible, we will end lessons 3 minutes early to allow classes to vacate the area before the next class arrives.

The safety and well-being of our community is our absolute priority and we have made careful and extensive preparations to ensure a safe attendance for all.

Attendance

Please be aware that we will be maintaining the 3 rules we have had in place since March 2020. This includes 'Stay at home if you feel ill'. Please do not attend school if this is the case.

**Wash your hands regularly
Keep apart when you can
Stay at home if you feel unwell**

Those displaying symptoms of COVID-19

Under no circumstances should students or staff attend schools/setting 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 7 days, 10 days if unvaccinated;**
- **If you are a close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, you should follow the Welsh Government guidance based on your vaccination status.**

School Operations

An updated comprehensive assessment of the risks associated with COVID has been undertaken. Control measures have been introduced to limit these risks. However, it is important that all members of the school community adhere to these to lower the risk of transmission of the virus.

Entrance/Exit

Both gates will continue to be open. Only essential visitors, including parents, will be allowed on site. It is important that students follow the designated routes and entry points to the form zones to help keep others safe. When on site, students (irrespective of year group) will not be permitted to leave and return to the site.

Understanding zones

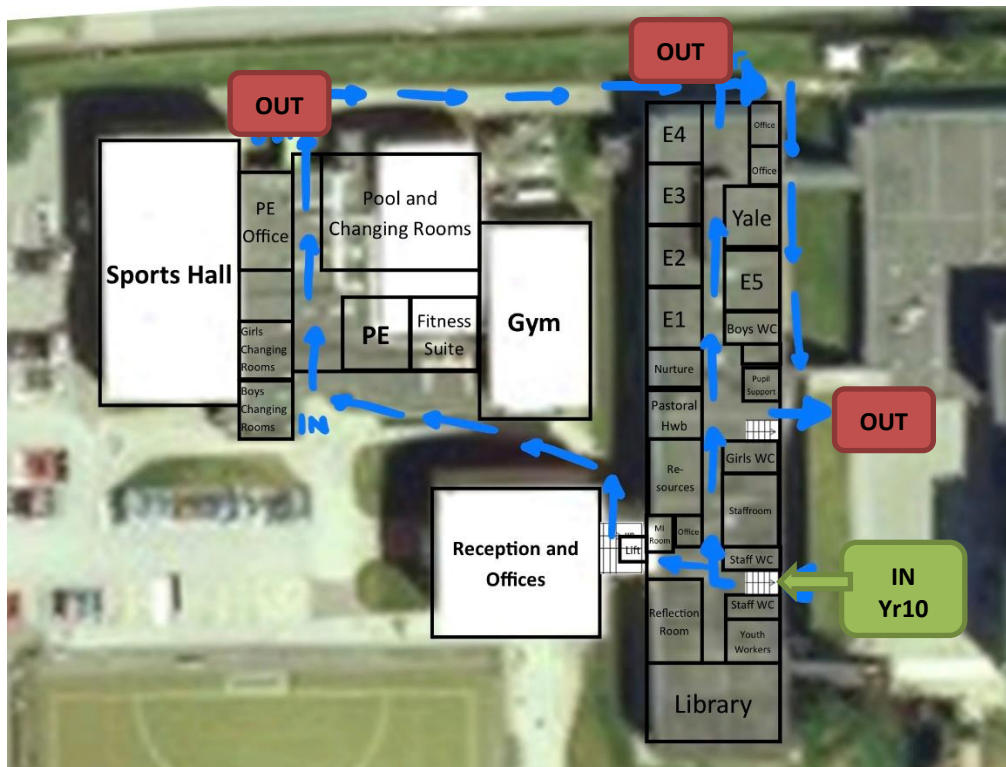
The school will continue to use the designated form zones. Each zone will be made up of only one year group before school, during form time, breaktime and lunchtime.

During lesson time movement between zones will follow a one-way system, outside where possible. Where a one-way system is not possible, we will end lessons 3 minutes early to allow classes to vacate the area before the next class arrives.

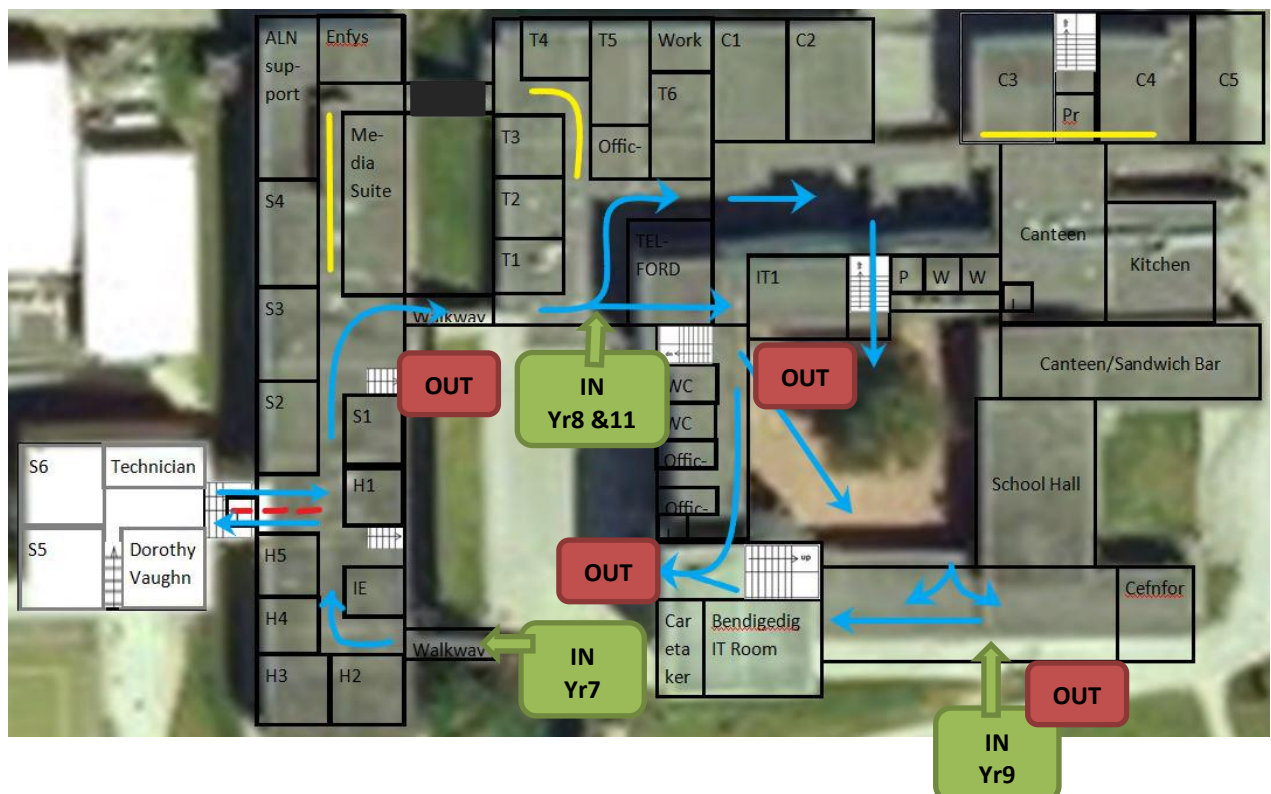
Entrances and One Way Systems

Blue – One Way System, Red – Year Group Entrances, Yellow – staggered lesson areas, Green - form time in doors

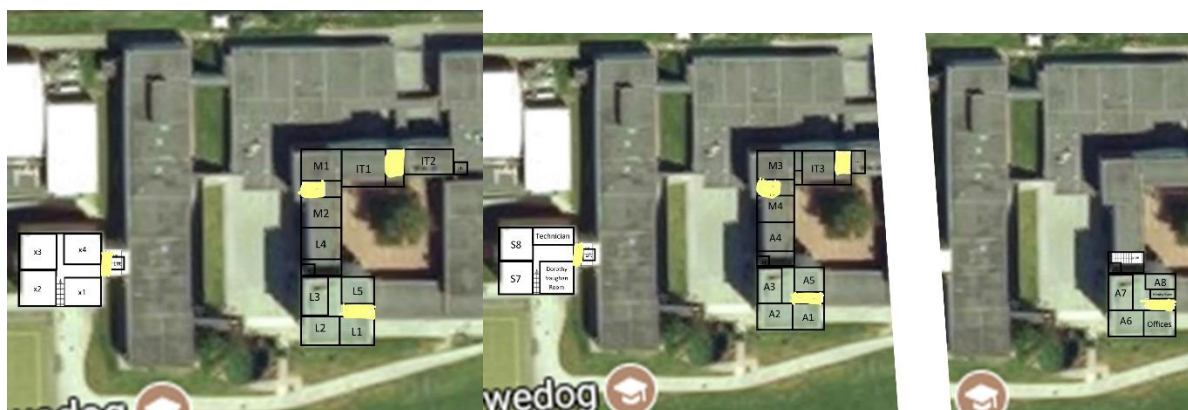
PE, English and Ground Floor



Humanities, Science and Main Ground Floors



Tower Block and Stairwells



Classrooms

To allow access to specialist areas, we will allow students to move between the zones to attend lessons. To facilitate this, staff will remain at least 2m away from students and each other. Classroom arrangements and activities will be remodelled to ensure appropriate distancing and to minimise physical contact.

Students will continue to use the zone for meals, form time, morning and lunch break and toilet access. Activities, breaks and lunch will be taken in a designated area outside when possible or in the designated indoor zone when the weather is poor. In addition, we will have a seating plan for all lessons to assist with Teach, Trace and Protect.

Every desk and all shared equipment being used will be wiped down between each lesson.

The classrooms have good levels of airflow and ventilation, which includes opening of windows.

Cleaning and maintaining the site

The cleaning of non-healthcare settings guidance is understood by the relevant staff and will always be followed. For example, all staff wash hands following any cleaning activity; where cleaning products are used, staff to wear appropriate PPE (e.g. vinyl or nitrile gloves and aprons).

The zones and areas used each day will be cleaned each day. Particular attention will be given to clean 'high-touch' areas and surfaces, which will be cleaned more frequently than normal, including bathrooms, railings, tables, equipment and door handles. Our cleaning staff will always be expected to maintain physical distancing from each other and from teaching/support staff and students.

Classroom will be cleaned after each lesson by the teachers. Desks, chairs, handles and other high touch areas will be cleaned with soapy water using blue roll and microfibre cloths. Staff will also have access to rubber gloves, aprons if needed.

Tissues will be placed in a separate waste bin with a lid and disposed of safely. The school will double-bag this waste in line with latest guidance and ensure it is removed daily.

If any waste is suspected of being in contact with someone showing symptoms of COVID, it will be placed in a waste bag, held in a secure place for 72 hours then disposed of as other waste is. Our Site Manager will ensure that the cleaning team fully understand the cleaning requirements; and ensure that they have appropriate training, products and equipment available in a timely manner.

A hygiene 'check list' of frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned using designated materials. These include

- Bannisters and/or balustrades;
- Classroom desks and tables;
- Toilet facilities;
- Door and window handles;
- Furniture;
- Light switches;
- Reception desks;
- Computer equipment;
- Sports equipment;
- Telephones.

School day

The school day will start and finish at the same time. Students and staff will attend for full day sessions. In areas where one-way systems are not possible, classes will leave 3 minutes early to allow the area to clear before the next class arrives.

Enhanced hygiene expectations - The school will ensure that all staff and students are made aware of the importance of regularly washing their hands. Specifically, that hands should be washed with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Staff will also ensure students are reminded of effective handwashing techniques, as highlighted by the National Health Service [guidance](#). These will be displayed around the school as posters for clarity.

Regular handwashing should include

- on arrival at and when leaving the school;
- before and after handling food;
- before and after handling objects and equipment that may have been used by others;
- where there has been any physical contact; and
- after people blow their nose, sneeze or cough.

Handwashing is considered more effective than the use of hand sanitizers. However, hand sanitizers have been made available to increase opportunities for students and staff to maintain high standards of personal hygiene. Hand sanitisers will be placed in every classroom used, as well as zone entrance and exit points. However, students and staff may wish to carry their own personal hand sanitiser.

Students and staff should cough into their elbow. Insofar as it is possible, students and staff should be encouraged not to touch their face, especially when using a tissue or elbow to cough.

While the school will reinforce good personal hygiene habits, the support of families at home to instil the importance of these practices is crucial to reducing risk of transmission. Support will be made available for any students who have trouble cleaning their hands independently e.g. some of our younger students and/or those students with additional learning needs. There may also be occasions where some students may be supervised during hand washing to maintain routines.

Use of face coverings

At Ysgol Clywedog we continue to expect staff and students to wear face coverings in all indoor areas. We feel it is appropriate as the layout of parts of the school makes it difficult to stick to physical distancing when moving around.

We are continuing this option, alongside the other protective measures put in place to ensure a safe return.

In summary:

- Staff and students should wear face coverings when inside the school building,
- We will have a small supply of spares available for students who struggle to access them, or if theirs have become unsafe to wear. We will not turn students away if they don't have them, but they will be expected to wear them.

- We will make sure staff and students receive clear instructions on how to put on, remove, store and dispose of them.

How to put on a face covering safely: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Tv2BVN_WTk (W.H.O.)

Welsh Government Education Guidance <https://gov.wales/education-coronavirus>

People who are exempt from wearing a face covering:

- you are not able to put on or to wear a face covering because of a physical or mental illness, or because of a condition or impairment
- you are accompanying somebody who relies on lip reading where they need to communicate and you cannot access a clear face covering
- you are escaping from a threat or danger and don't have a face covering

It is not necessary for a person who is exempt to request a letter from a medical professional about their reason for not wearing a face mask. Please inform the school if your child is exempt via mailbox@clywedog.wrexham.sch.uk

Asthma UK has said most people with the condition are able to wear a mask, adding that the coverings do not reduce a person's oxygen supply.

However, they added if it makes the asthmatic person feel breathless then they should take it off.

Uniform and Equipment

Students will be required to wear full school uniform, please see the link for further information: <http://clywedog.org/parents/school-uniform/>

Please can I remind you that no fabric trainers or shoes are permitted; shoes or trainers must be plain black leather-style, with no logos, colours or flashing.

Blazers are compulsory; however, in warm weather the jumper is optional.

Students will be required to bring a school bag to carry their books and equipment, and I would also ask that you ensure that your child always has the necessary equipment, to reduce the likelihood of any transmission that may arise when they borrow materials.

In addition, we will seek to reduce the need for teachers to collect books or work from students and will continue to provide homework or additional resources via Google Classrooms.

To reduce the need for access to changing rooms we will allow students to wear the school PE kit on days that they have PE on the timetable. **Please ensure this is a school PE kit as part of the school uniform.**

Identifying and managing students/staff with symptoms

The most common, though not exclusive, symptoms of COVID are a persistent dry cough; difficulty in breathing; loss of taste and/or smell; and high temperature. Parents/carers and staff are asked to follow the national guidance relation to 'stay at home' where these symptoms are identified: <https://gov.wales/alert-level-2>.

Any student or member of staff who displays symptoms will be sent home immediately. Students displaying symptoms of coronavirus will be isolated, in a designated area of the school, so that they do not come in contact with other students and as few staff as possible. The student will remain safe until collection.

Where a symptomatic student is waiting to go home, they must use different toilets to the rest of the school to minimise the spread of infection. Parents/carers need to be aware that, for the safety of other students and staff, they may need to be available to collect their child in the event of them displaying symptoms and/or become unwell.

In the case of a symptomatic student who requires supervision prior to collection

- Supervising staff will wear a fluid-resistant surgical mask;
- Where contact is necessary, supervising staff will also wear disposable gloves and a disposable apron; and
- If there is a risk of splashing to the eyes, such as from coughing, spitting and/or vomiting, supervising staff will also wear eye protection;
- Supervising staff will wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds, after the student has been collected.

All areas used by a symptomatic student will require a deep clean once vacated. Where a member of staff displays symptoms of COVID-19, they will report to the head teacher before returning home. Symptomatic staff are to follow [advice](#) given.

Physical distancing

The school has taken steps to ensure physical distancing arrangements are in place and supported. There will be areas of the school where 2m is not possible between students, but students should avoid any physical contact and remain apart as much as possible. The school's expectations around physical distancing have been developed to help keep students, staff, and their families safe and well. These measures are designed to help ensure that the chain of infection is broken.

Staff are also expected to remember that physical distancing applies to their interactions with other staff as well as students: it is easy to forget this. The use of staff rooms and/or departmental workrooms will be staggered to limit occupancy, or where possible, other rooms in school are utilised as break rooms for staff. An additional staffroom will continue to be used and all staff rooms will display capacity figures on the doors.

The school will continue to use telephone contact and Google Meet to support interaction with students, families, governors and other stakeholders. Meetings with families will only take place on a face-to-face basis, when it is considered safe to do so. This measure is designed to limit the number of people entering the school site to help reduce the risk of transmission.

Examples of Visual Displays

Students and staff should expect to see visual displays around the school site which promote physical distancing, good personal hygiene and one-way systems for transfer between different areas of the school site.



Lateral Flow Testing

We have made rapid-result coronavirus (COVID) tests available to all staff working in school. As the understanding of Omicron variant develops, the guidance is likely to change. Current guidance is all staff and students should test three times a week using LFDs (on Monday, Wednesday and Friday) and continue testing regularly three times a week after the start of term in January.

Students have been given a testing kit and shown an NHS video about the testing. [A link to all the documentation, video and privacy notice is here.](#)

Anyone who tests positive using a Lateral Flow Test (LFT) must not attend a school. They and everyone they live with must self-isolate immediately according to the self-isolation guidance whilst they undertake the following actions:

- [report the test result online to gov.uk](#)
- book a follow up PCR test through the [online booking portal.](#)
- notify their school of a positive result by text 07458 303266

They will be contacted by the local contact tracing team to identify contacts who will need to self-isolate – they must follow any advice given by the local contact tracing team.

A negative test result does not remove the risk of transmission. Please remember if you test negative, this does not mean you can relax your infection prevention measures and if you show any of the COVID-19 symptoms to self-isolate immediately and book a test.

Test, Trace, Protect

[Test, Trace, Protect](#) came into effect in Wales on 1st June 2020. Similarly, the Education Minister has indicated that school-based staff will be able to access testing.

Where a member of staff or child receives a positive test for COVID-19, all students and members of staff in that 'group' will need to self-isolate according to the latest guidance. If other cases are detected at the school, the local health protection team from Public Health Wales will contact the school to take appropriate steps to reduce risk of reproduction of the virus. This may include requiring further individuals to self-isolate.

Transport

At present, facemasks will be compulsory for all passengers travelling by bus or taxi, and this will therefore apply to Ysgol Clywedog students. All students eligible for school transport will be contacted by the Wrexham school transport service over the summer holidays to confirm arrangements, and if you have any queries then please contact them directly. <https://www.wrexham.gov.uk/service/school-transport>

Catering (lunch and snacks)

Students will need to bring a packed lunch or they can pre-order lunch from the canteen at the start of the day and it will be delivered to a drop-off point within each zone.

However, due to the need to restrict contacts between year groups, we will be unable to provide breakfasts before school or snacks at break time.

Parents are kindly requested to ensure that accounts are credited using the online payment system prior to the school reopening, as the canteen will be unable to accept any cash payments. <https://www.parentpay.com>
Please be aware the vending machines will not be available.

Use of personal protective equipment (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) have been identified as the most effective ways to prevent the spread of coronavirus. Hand hygiene is critical before and after all direct contact with a child or young person, and after cleaning equipment and the environment.

In line with the latest medical and scientific evidence, there is no requirement for the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) when undertaking routine educational activities in classroom/school settings.

The school will work closely with the local authority to ensure personal protective equipment is available for the following

Suspected coronavirus (COVID-19)

- Gloves, aprons and a fluid-resistant surgical mask should be worn if a child or young person becomes unwell with symptoms of COVID-19 and needs direct personal care;
- Eye protection should also be worn if a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes such as from coughing, spitting, or vomiting;
- Gloves and aprons should be used when cleaning the areas where a person suspected of having COVID-19 has been.

Intimate care

- Gloves and aprons should be used when providing intimate care to a child or young person.
- This can include personal, hands-on care such as washing, toileting, or first aid and certain clinical procedures such as assisted feeding;
- Fluid-resistant surgical mask and eye protection should also be worn if a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes such as from coughing, spitting, or vomiting;
- Gloves, fluid repellent gown, FFP3 mask and eye protection are indicated when undertaking aerosol generating procedures such as suction;
- Gloves and aprons should be used when cleaning equipment or surfaces that might be contaminated with body fluids such as saliva or respiratory secretions.

Guidance will be followed which sets out that gloves and an apron should be used when cleaning areas where a person suspected of having COVID-19 has been.

The school will work closely with the local authority to obtain the necessary PPE to cover the above. Training will be provided to staff to ensure they understand how to put on/remove PPE in order to reduce the risk of onward transmission of infection.

Emergencies, accidents and first aid

There will be named members of staff who are qualified in first aid on site each day. In the event of an accident at school, the same procedures will apply. However, where a student requires first aid, staff members must wear appropriate personal protective equipment (gloves; face mask; goggles and/or face-shield) whilst administering treatment. Any staff who administer first aid or have direct contact with students must immediately wash hands and avoid contact with face until hygiene practices have been observed.

Safeguarding

The school recognises that students will have encountered different experiences and home environments during lockdown. All staff have been reminded of their safeguarding duties within the statutory safeguarding guidance for education settings [Keeping Learners Safe](#) and with the [Wales Safeguarding Procedures](#).

Safeguarding procedures remain the same. In the event of a safeguarding concern, then students and staff are expected to follow the usual procedures. Where there is a safeguarding concern, students and staff should report the concern to Mrs Donna Jones, ALNCo (Designated Senior Person) immediately; or in her absence Ms Megan Jones, Student Support (Deputy Designated Senior Person).

I hope this provides you with an overview of our arrangements for the New Year. Please be assured that your child will receive an induction programme on their return to school, which will set out in detail the new working arrangements.

We recognise that these arrangements may appear daunting and unusual, but I would like to reassure you that we will do our utmost to ensure that all of our students are nurtured and cared for, in a safe environment

Frequently Asked Questions

The Welsh Government has a dedicated COVID-19 frequently asked questions [section](#), which relates to the latest guidance and legislation.

School Specific FAQs

1. What is expected of my child in school?

We expect all students to return to school, unless they are feeling ill or have tested positive (or a member of the household) for COVID (as above)

2. Will distance learning still be set if my child does not attend?

There have been lots of positives from distance learning and we will be continuing with some of the processes that have worked well. Google Classrooms will be the main portal for homework and will be available in case of a local or second lockdown. Online lessons will continue when a year group is not on site, but will not be provided on days when a year group is in school.

3. When will school get back to 'normal'?

The health and wellbeing of both students and staff will be the primary focus when making any decisions on a return to full operations. These decisions will be influenced by guidance from the local authority and national government.

4. Will all students and staff be expected to wear PPE?

No. Personal protective equipment will not be necessary. Students and staff must wear a face covering in the building, these are not necessarily medical grade PPE. We will provide staff and students with a 3-ply reusable face covering.

5. How will you keep my child safe if/when they return to school?

As always, we will do everything we can to ensure the safety of your child (and staff). We have undertaken a comprehensive assessment of the risks associated with phased re-opening and COVID-19. We have identified a range of control measures which are designed to lower these risks. However, it does require students, staff and families to work with us to adhere to these.

6. My child receives a free school meal. Will they still be fed?

Yes. Free school meals will be available as part of the canteen ordering system.

7. How will work be set for my child?

Learning will be face-to-face learning for the summer term, with remote learning undertaken from home only if the need arises (apart from homework!). We will continue to set homework using Google classrooms and staff will then provide feedback, in line with the school's agreed policies.

8. What if the situation does not continue to improve?

We are continuing the school timetable and calendar as normal, but can revert back to a hybrid model which includes reduced school access if needed. As soon as the situation changes, we will communicate and act accordingly.

9. What if another child misbehaves and doesn't take the safety of others seriously?

In order to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students and staff, everyone at school needs to take responsibility.. Where a student has sustained difficulty understanding and/or fails to follow physical distancing and personal protective procedures, the health and safety of themselves, fellow students and staff will be compromised. Therefore, the school will be operating the usual behaviour process for students on-site in relation to health and safety. This means if a student does not respond positively to classroom warnings, in relation to their ability to follow our safety measures, they will be removed and they will have to work remotely. In this scenario, parents/carers will be asked to collect their child immediately. We ask that parents/carers carefully explain the rationale to students so that this doesn't become a concern. However, we cannot risk the safety of students and/or staff.