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Dear Parents and Carers

As you are aware, the Minister for Education in Wales (Kirsty Williams) announced on 3 June 2020 that all schools will reopen for children to have the opportunity to 'Check in, Catch up, Prepare' for summer and September. This means schools will re-open for up to one third of learners at any one time on 29 June 2020 with term extended by a week now ending on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

Some schools have been open throughout that current crisis, offering support for children of key workers and vulnerable children. From 29 June all schools will offer support for these children and other children in every year group.

Obviously everyone's key priority is ensuring the safety of learners and staff in school. A rigorous school risk-assessment is taking place in every school which is considering staffing levels; the health needs of children, staff and household members; our buildings and classrooms. We now have a picture of what school may be able to look like when we reopen on the 29 June, the steps we will take to minimise risk to children and adults, and how you can support us.

Please note government advice makes clear no one can guarantee social distancing can always be maintained in schools particularly in classes with younger children. As a result, anyone who has received, or lives with someone who has received a shielding letter, will not be able to attend school as strict social distancing cannot be maintained, nor guaranteed.

### **What will school look like?**

The school will look and feel very different to how the children left it. The learning environments will be basic and the curriculum altered:

- Every child will be allocated to a small group of no more than 10 children dependent on classroom size – some groups will be smaller
- Children will not be able to interact/mix with any children outside the group they are in. This includes during arrival, departure, play time and lunchtime
- Children will be expected to wash their hands upon arrival at school and frequently through the day
- Children will stay in the same area throughout the day as much as possible – this will help us maintain social distancing and helps us maintain an effective cleaning schedule in school
- All children will be asked to bring a packed lunch and their own drinks container – including those who normally have free school meals. Families entitled to free school meals will continue to receive direct payments. If you think you are entitled but are not receiving payments you can apply at:  
<https://www.torfaen.gov.uk/en/Forms/Request/FreeSchoolMeals-Covid19.aspx>. By not

having canteens in operation, this will help us maintain social distancing and manage the school day more safely for everyone.

- Movement around school will be minimised so where possible classrooms will be accessed through external doors and there may be one way systems established inside school to keep children apart where this isn't possible
- If a child or staff member is unwell during the day, staff have access to masks, gloves and other personal protection equipment. The person who is unwell will be safely moved to a designated room in school. If this is a child, parents/ carers will be contacted and asked to come immediately to school. You will be given advice about how you can arrange for your child to be tested.
- If a child in a group is unwell and tests positive for COVID-19, the rest of their class or group within school will be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days. The other household members of that group do not need to self-isolate unless the child they live with in that group subsequently develops symptoms.
- Only one parent/carer should bring the child[ren] to school
- Children will not have an assembly, circle time and lining up as this now cannot happen.

Life in school will be different and we will establish new safe routines. We will have no more than a third of all students on site at any one time and initially we have less than this as we develop these new routines. There will be a strong wellbeing focus ensuring we '**check in**', reconnecting as a school community and re-establishing those highly effective teacher, student relationships that we all know are so important.

We shall also use this time prior to the summer holiday to '**catch up**'. Time will be used to retrieve what the students have learnt and identify and address skills deficits. We also need to recognise that this new way of working will be in place in September for a significant period of time therefore we shall also '**prepare**' our students. It is important they understand and are able to enjoy the blended learning approach of dedicated, personalised classroom experiences and distance learning.

### **Which children will be able to attend?**

To help us ensure school is safe and secure for students and staff we need your engagement. We would like all parents to return the attached form and return it to us no later than Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June indicating whether you would like your child[ren] to attend school or not for the remainder of the term. If you are a key worker please make sure you tick this option when completing the form. Welsh Government have been clear that there will be no penalty for parents if their child does not attend school this term. I am sure the decision about whether you want your child to return to school at this time, is one you want to think carefully about. We will respect every family's decision but it is important we hear from you if you want your child[ren] to return by Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June at the latest.

Once we know how many parents want their children to return I will write to all parents individually giving you details of which days your child can come into school. Please note that we must have a completed form from all children wishing to attend. We are currently talking to the Local Authority about transport arrangements for those pupils who receive it and knowing which children will be returning will help us plan what provision can be put in place safely.

We know for some students and staff a return to our school site will not be possible due to medical vulnerability. We shall continue with our distance learning provision and further refine this where possible to ensure your child feels supported in their learning.

Please continue to keep safe and well and I shall be back in contact shortly once our detailed plans for a phased re-opening are finalised.

Yours sincerely



L Jones

Acting Headteacher

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Penygarn Community Primary School

I would like my child[ren] to return to school on 29 June until the end of term :

*Child 1*

First name \_\_\_\_\_ Surname \_\_\_\_\_

*Child 2*

First name \_\_\_\_\_ Surname \_\_\_\_\_

*Child 3*

First name \_\_\_\_\_ Surname \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate if you are a key worker by ticking this box

*If you are a key worker and want your child to attend each day, you will be asked to provide evidence of your status to school. Please see the school website for details of how you can do this.*

**Parents who do not want to send their children to school do not need to complete this form.**

**Please send your completed form to *head.penygarncps@torfaen.gov.uk***