

Please ask for:

Direct Line:

E-Mail:

Our Ref:

Your Ref:

Date:

4 June 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

We want to share with you the latest information about the phased re-opening of all Swansea schools. The Minister for Education in Wales (Kirsty Williams) announced on 3 June 2020 that all children would have the opportunity to 'Check in, Catch up, Prepare' for summer and September. The next phase will start on 29 June 2020 with term extended by a week and will end on 27 July 2020.

This is an anxious time for everyone. We know that we have seen a fall in COVID-19 cases nationally and your actions have made a big contribution to this. We also know that some families and children have found lockdown very difficult to cope with. Some will have been personally affected with loss and grief, others will have encountered financial challenges and we have all experienced change and uncertainty. The next stage is how we can now open things up gradually and sensibly so that we do not see an increase in cases locally.

We know you will feel uncertain and have many questions about your child's individual circumstances. We want to help deal with those questions and address your concerns.

The safety of children and staff is our priority.

Pupils who are in receipt of a shielding letter due to their medical vulnerability or who live in a household with someone who is in receipt of a shielding letter should not return to school.

School leadership teams will be carrying out risk assessments to help them identify the approach that is right in your child's school. As a council, we acknowledge that not all schools will be able to meet the Welsh Government's ambitions immediately. Capacity in schools will vary and many schools will need to introduce a phased re-integration. This might affect the year groups that can attend and the days available.

Schools will work very differently, at least for the rest of this summer term. Class sizes will be small and schools will implement social distancing. This means lessons may run differently, break times and lunch times may be staggered, school start and finish times may be different. We will be working closely with schools and governors to try to ensure consistency in terms of principles and approach.

If your child requires home to school transport, these arrangements will change as strict safety and social distancing arrangements will be applied on the vehicles. We will provide further details in due course.

We know that schools not being fully open can create difficulties for working parents. We are creating a set of frequently asked questions (FAQs) for the council website <https://www.swansea.gov.uk/covid19schoolsandcolleges>. Please take a look at these first. If they do not address your questions, you can email us at coronavirusenquiries@swansea.gov.uk. We are also setting up a dedicated telephone enquiry line on 01792 636033 and 01792 636034. All these will be available **from 9am on Monday 8 June 2020**.

If you would like to speak to someone in a language other than English/Welsh, please email EMAU@swansea.gov.uk with your phone number and the name of the language.

Schools on our behalf will be asking you as parents/carers on your intentions through a survey. It is also worth noting that emergency childcare will continue alongside the above.

We all agree that it will be good for children to return to school but it has to be when schools and parents are confident that this is safe. Swansea Council continues to work closely with all our schools who, we are sure that you agree, have performed a fantastic job under very difficult conditions.

I will write to you again once we have had further guidance from Welsh Government. Lots to consider I am sure you appreciate and there will be more information for you as soon as possible. Thank you in anticipation of your continued support.

Yours sincerely



Nick Williams
Director of Education