

Questions about the full re-opening of schools in September 2020.

As parents and carers, we are sure that you will have many questions about how school will look when we re-open fully in September. In this document we have tried to anticipate what those questions may be and provide answers for them using the latest advice that we have been provided with.

We are sure that you may still have further questions, that are not covered here and if this is the case then we would urge you to contact school.



Is school safe for my child to return?

Government guidance states:

The risk to children themselves of becoming severely ill from coronavirus (COVID-19) is very low and there are negative health impacts of being out of school.

The balance of risk is now overwhelmingly in favour of children returning to school. For the vast majority of children, the benefits of being back in school far outweigh the very low risk from coronavirus (COVID-19).

School leaders have been instructed to put in place proportionate protective measures for children and staff.

When welcoming all children back this autumn, schools will be asked to minimise the number of contacts that a pupil has during the school day.



What else is happening to make sure that the school is Covid-19 safe?

The following measures will also be in place, based on government guidance:

- a requirement that people who are ill stay at home,
 - robust hand and respiratory hygiene,
 - enhanced cleaning arrangements,
 - active engagement with NHS Test and Trace,
 - risk assessment has been completed considering how to reduce contacts and maximise distancing between those in school wherever possible and minimise potential for contamination so far as is reasonably practicable.
 - Stationery items (pens, pencils etc) will not be shared
-



How will the school be reducing contacts between people?

We will be:

- grouping children together in year group cohorts,
 - avoiding contact between groups; including the start and end of the school day; playtime and lunchtime,
 - arranging classrooms with forward facing desks (where this is practical – not in Year N, Year R and Year 1),
 - making sure that staff maintain distance from pupils and other staff as much as possible.
-



Does my child have to return to school in September?

Yes.

Government guidance states:

School attendance will be mandatory from the beginning of the autumn term. This means from that point, the usual rules on school attendance will apply, including:

- parents' duty to secure 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
-



What if happens if they or a member of the family has been shielding?

Government guidance states:

Shielding advice for all adults and children will pause on 1 August. This 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 are shielding.



Does my child need to wear a face mask?

Government guidance states:

Public Health England does not (based on current evidence) recommend the use of face coverings in schools. This evidence will be kept under review. They are not required in schools as pupils and staff are mixing in consistent groups, and because misuse may inadvertently increase the risk of transmission. There may also be negative effects on communication and education.

If a child arrives at school wearing a face mask, they will be instructed not to touch the front of their face covering during use or when removing them. They must wash their hands immediately on arrival (as is the case for all pupils), dispose of temporary face coverings in a covered bin 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.



How often will children have to wash their hands?

Government guidance states:

Schools must ensure that pupils clean their hands regularly, including:

- when they arrive at school,
- when they return from breaks,
- when they change rooms,
- before and after eating.

Regular and thorough hand cleaning is going to be needed for the foreseeable future.



What should I do if my child is ill?

It is a requirement that people who are ill should stay at home.

If your child is unwell and can not attend school, you should notify the school as normal.

It is essential that you inform the school if your child, or any family member (including siblings), is displaying coronavirus symptoms.



Pupils, staff and other adults should not come into the school if they have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms or have tested positive in the last 7 days. Other members of their household (including any siblings) should self-isolate for 14 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms.

Government guidance states:

Schools must ensure that staff members and parents/carers understand that they will need to be ready and willing to:

- book a test if they are displaying symptoms. Staff and pupils must not come into the school if they have symptoms. All children can be tested, including children under 5, but children aged 11 and under will need to be helped by their parents/carers if using a home testing kit
- provide details of anyone they have been in close contact with if they were to test positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) or if asked by NHS Test and Trace
- self-isolate if they have been in close contact with someone who develops coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms or someone who tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)

The school should be informed immediately of any test results.



What will happen if my child becomes ill in school?

Government guidance states:

If anyone in the school becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), they must be sent home and advised to follow 'stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection'.

They must self-isolate for at least 7 days and should arrange to have a test to see if they have coronavirus (COVID-19). Other members of their household (including any siblings) should self-isolate for 14 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms.

The school should be informed immediately of any test results.



Do children need to wear school uniform?

Children should wear school uniform when they return to school. (For more information see the school website: www.portswoodpri.org.uk/information/uniform/)

Uniforms do not need to be cleaned any more often than usual, nor do they need to be cleaned using methods which are different from normal.

For the autumn term, in the first instance, children may wear trainers to school. This will allow them to safely participate in PE lessons but will also remove the need to bring PE kit in from home, to limit the amount of equipment they bring into school each day.



What should my child bring to school with them?

It is still recommended that pupils limit the amount of equipment they bring into school each day, to essentials such as lunch boxes, hats, coats, books, stationery. Bags are allowed.



Will my child need to bring their PE kit to school with them?

No. To reduce the number of items moving between home and school we ask that pupils do not bring PE kit into school for the autumn term. Children may wear trainers to school, so that they may safely participate in PE.



Will we be able to order hot dinners?

Yes.

The school kitchens will be providing hot meals at lunchtime for all those who want them. These can be paid for in the usual way, using the school's on-line payment system.

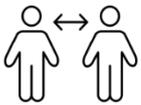
Please remember to pay for dinners in advance.

For more information on school meals please visit the school website:

<https://www.portswoodpri.org.uk/information/school-meals/>

If your child is in Year R, Year 1 or Year 2 they are entitled to a free school meal. Free school meals will still be available for other eligible pupils.

Parents may choose to provide pupils with a packed lunch. Please remember that these should not include any products that contain nuts or any sweets.



Will children need to maintain social distance?

Government guidance states:

For children old enough, they should also be supported to maintain distance and not touch staff and their peers where possible. This will not be possible for the youngest children and some children with complex needs and it is not feasible in some schools where space does not allow. Schools doing this where they can, and even doing this some of the time, will help.



Will things like reading books and homework be sent home?

Yes.

Pupils and teachers can take books and other shared resources home, although unnecessary sharing should be avoided, especially where this does not contribute to a pupil's education and development. Similar rules on hand cleaning, cleaning of the resources and rotation should apply to these resources.



If my child is upset or hurt will somebody be able to comfort them?

Yes, of course. We will support children in this way as we always have done.



What else will be different in school?

Assemblies will not happen in the traditional ways.

Government guidance states:

Schools should avoid large gatherings such as assemblies or collective worship with more than one group.

Assemblies, where possible, will be held virtually in school using on-line conferencing software.



Singing will be limited. Due to an additional risk of infection in environments where you or others are singing, chanting, playing wind or brass instruments or shouting (even if individuals are at a distance). Singing, and the playing of wood and brass instruments is limited to group sizes of no more than 15.



The classrooms may look a little different. *Government guidance states:* "Schools should make small adaptations to the classroom to support distancing where possible. That should include seating pupils side by side and facing forwards, rather than face to face or side on, and might include moving unnecessary furniture out of classrooms to make more space."

This may not be possible for children of Reception or Year 1. This difficulty is acknowledged within government guidance when it states that maintaining distancing measures "will not be possible for the youngest children."



Children will need to come onto the school site on their own once they have been brought to the designated gate by parents.



Can I still talk to my child's teacher or the office?

From the start of the autumn term "coming onto the site without an appointment is not allowed." You can, of course make an appointment via the office to speak to your child's teacher. This may need to be done by telephone.

Communication with the office should be done by emailing via info@portswoodpri.org.uk or by calling the office directly.

Email communication is preferable and is likely to result in a quicker response.



What happens if we are late?

In order to safely implement our proposed strategies, in line with the guidance given, it is imperative that your child arrives and leaves at the designated time. We **need** the support of all parents and children in this matter.

If you are late and miss the arrival window for your child's year group, you will have to wait until all other groups are safely in school, and in their classes, before your child will be allowed to enter the school. You will have to wait with them as they remain in parent's care until safely on the school grounds.

It is equally as important that you are on time for collection. Families who are repeatedly late, will be subject to the same sanctions and legal actions as set out by the government. This will include referrals to the Educational Welfare Service and children's safeguarding team.



How are you planning to help my child catch up with the schooling they have missed?

Teachers have been busy reviewing lost learning caused by the coronavirus crisis and identifying which key skills will need to be prioritised in the autumn term.

There will be some need for additional provision for core skills of English and maths before children can move onto age-appropriate curriculum and learning for the school year that they are in.

The following areas are likely to require additional focus at the beginning of the autumn term:

Nursery: communication and language, personal, social and emotional development (PSED) and physical development.

Year R: gaps in language, early reading and mathematics, acquisition of phonic knowledge and extending vocabulary.

Key Stages 1 and 2: phonics and reading, increasing vocabulary, writing and mathematics.

Our aim is to resume the school's normal curriculum content as soon as we feel that we are in a position to do so.



Will all subjects still be taught?

Yes. We aim to teach as ambitious and broad curriculum as possible in all subjects from the start of the autumn term, however we will make use of existing flexibilities to create time to cover the most important missed content.



Will groups still be happening for maths and English in Year 5 and 6?

Yes. The children will still be able to be taught by different teachers if they remain in their year group bubbles, and hygiene procedures are in place.



Will school trips still be happening?

The current advice suggests that: "In the autumn term, schools can resume non-overnight domestic educational visits."

Once the school year has begun, we will look into the viability of resuming school visits and be in contact with parents as appropriate.



Will any after-school clubs be available?

For the first half of the autumn term no after school clubs will be running. The viability of after school clubs will be explored with external providers during the first half term. If appropriate safeguarding measures can be implemented then these may resume, though the likelihood is that they will be year group specific. This will be in order to maintain a reduction in the contact between different year groups. The school will be in contact with further information as appropriate.
