

Please see below some of the questions that we have anticipated you may have about school in September.

Which year groups are returning to school?

The Government has asked primary schools to welcome back all children from foundation stage to year 6.

Does my child have to attend?

It is now compulsory for all children to attend school

I am worried that my child is vulnerable or that a family member is. Should I send them back to school?

The Government has issued the following guidance;

Pupils who are shielding or self-isolating

We now know much more about coronavirus (COVID-19) and so in future there will be far fewer children and young people advised to shield whenever community transmission rates are high. Therefore, the majority of pupils will be able to return to school. You should note however 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 will pause on 1 August, subject to a continued decline in the rates of community transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). 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. 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, will be advised to shield during the period where rates remain high and therefore they may be temporarily absent (see below).

some pupils no longer required to shield but who generally remain under the care of a specialist health professional may need to discuss their care with their health professional before returning to school (usually 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.

Where a pupil is unable to attend school because they are complying with clinical and/or public health advice, we expect schools to be able to immediately offer them access to remote education. Schools should monitor engagement with this activity (as set out in the section below).

Where children are not able to attend school as parents are following clinical and/or public health advice, absence will not be penalised.

How big will the bubbles be?

At Meavy, the children in Acorn Class and Beech Class will form one bubble and the children in Chestnut Class and Oak class will form another.

At Lady Modiford's, the children in Vixen Tor and Hound Tor will form one bubble and the children in Sheepstor will form another.

Will you guarantee that social distancing takes place e.g. keeping children 2m apart?

We will of course do our best to support distancing, especially with any adults in the school.

Our KS2 classrooms will have children seated two per desk, side by side where possible, and they will be encouraged to adhere to social distancing.

We are not going to be implementing strict social distancing within our Foundation stage and KS1 bubbles.

We will be ensuring that each class 'bubble' does not mix with other bubbles. Children will only be able to socialise with children in their bubbles, even at playtime and lunchtime.

How do I explain social distancing to my child?

Be open and honest, using language they will understand. Explain that they are helping others by their actions. Use drawings if needed and use a positive tone. Try to make the children feel safe.

Why can't my children (siblings) play with each other at break time?

To enable us to maintain distance from others for each class bubble, it is important that children only play with children in their bubble. This helps us to limit the number of people each bubble comes into contact with, which will aid in preventing transmission.

We will be implementing staggered breaktimes and lunchtimes for this reason.

What hygiene measures will be in place to prevent transmission?

We will:

follow the COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings guidance

ensure that sufficient handwashing facilities are available. All classrooms have sinks. Hand sanitiser will be available in areas without access to soap and water.

clean surfaces that children and young people are touching, such as toys, books, desks, chairs, doors, sinks, toilets, light switches, more regularly than normal

resources that can not be easily cleaned may still be used but will be quarantined for 72 hours after use.

ensure that lidded bins for tissues are emptied throughout the day

where possible, ensure spaces are well ventilated.

prop doors open, where safe to do so (bearing in mind fire safety and safeguarding), to limit use of door handles and aid ventilation

We will ensure that all adults and children:

frequently wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds and dry thoroughly.

clean their hands on arrival at the setting, before and after eating, and after sneezing or coughing
are encouraged not to touch their mouth, eyes and nose

use a tissue or elbow to cough or sneeze and use bins for tissue waste ('catch it, bin it, kill it')

ensure that help is available for children and young people who have trouble cleaning their hands independently

We will consider how to encourage young children to learn and practise these habits through games, songs and repetition.

Will children be confined to the same classroom environment most of the day?

Government advice on the Scientific evidence shows that the outdoor environment is much more manageable in terms of virus transmission. In line with this and in keeping with our federation ethos, we will be embracing outdoor learning, where possible. However, outside of this, we will keep children within their own classroom during the day.

Will toast be sold at break time?

No. at the moment the kitchen will not be serving toast or milk at break time. Children in KS1 will be provided with fruit as part of the national scheme. KS2 children are welcome to bring in a fruit-based snack to eat at break time.

How will lunch time work?

The school will run a staggered lunchtime. The children will eat their lunch in the school hall in their bubble. Children who wish to bring a packed lunch may now do so in a lunchbox. There will no longer be cool boxes/fridges in the classrooms.

What measures will school be employing to help prevent transmission?

In addition to what has already been mentioned

We will:

give children a designated classroom and group (which we are referring to as their bubble) for lessons and play, to minimise the opportunity for mixing.

regularly clean the setting.

only allow the children to bring in minimal resources from home.

use PPE such as gloves, aprons, masks, hand sanitiser and anti-bac wipes as identified in our Risk assessments, when it is necessary to do so.

confine resources to rooms to minimise sharing and when sharing is essential (eg laptops and iPads), clean resources before transference.

organise lunchtimes and playtimes differently, keeping children in their bubbles.

be vigilant in identifying children with symptoms, isolate them and ask parents to collect them
removal and/or restricting access to unnecessary items in classrooms.

removal and/or restricting access to some soft furnishings, soft toys and toys that are hard to clean.

PE equipment will be thoroughly cleaned in between bubbles using them

Will my child be expected to share resources, such as pens and pencils?

Children have been asked to bring a small pencil case into school. This will be for their sole use. Any resources that are shared (e.g. school laptops) will be disinfected after use.

Will everyone arrive at school at the same time causing an increase in risk?

In order to adhere to Government guidelines, parents/carers must abide by the drop off and pick up times (see return to school letter for details.) If you are late, you will need to join the back of the queue. Children will not be allowed to enter the school before their time slot. If your child arrives after their bubble has entered the school building you must bring them to reception and use the hand sanitiser before pressing the buzzer.

The approach to drop off areas will be marked out with a 2m queue (just like a supermarket) and there will be a drop off zone from where a member of staff will invite pupils in. In order to keep everybody safe, parents will not be able to accompany their child to their bubbles. Staff members will not be able to have conversations with parents at drop off or collection as we need to get all the children into school as quickly and safely as possible.

If, when you get to drop off, your child doesn't want to come into school, with your help we will encourage them to separate from you but will be unable to intervene. If this should happen, we would advise that you and your child move to the side to see if you can encourage them to come into school. If ultimately this does not work, we will ask that you take your child home and try again

the next day. We obviously hope this situation doesn't arise but, we need to account for any possibility.

Only one parent or carer can accompany the child to school to minimise risk. Parents will not be invited to enter the building or playground but will drop off as described above.

Will the school have assembly/acts of worship?

Class bubbles will have an opportunity for reflection within their daily session, but there will be no mass gatherings or whole school daily acts of worship for the time being.

My child is feeling anxious about coming back to school, how can I prepare him/her?

You will need to prepare your child by talking about what school was like and what it will be like now. It will be different.

Sharing social stories can be really helpful for young children and help to express the situation in a clear factual way, reducing emotional responses.

It will be important to encourage your child to talk about their experiences in 'lockdown' and that this period is now ending..

Will children go straight back into normal lessons following the National Curriculum?

No, not initially.

The teachers will need to carefully find out what children have been able to learn over these difficult times. This will be done very gently enabling staff to decide which areas will need to be revisited since Easter to plug any gaps in learning which would cause problems later. However, we are going to be focussing on children's mental health and well-being above all else. It will have been a very difficult period for all our children and, with the school being so different, will need careful explaining and lots of emotional support. The staff will be organising lots of lessons which will rebuild any lost confidence and help children feel safe and welcome in school. This is called a 'recovery curriculum'. Where possible, the children will do this outside. We will include breaks, toilet visits and handwashing slots (at least 6 and especially on arrival and before eating) throughout the day. We have found that having a break when we feel the children need one has worked even better than having a specific time every morning so we will be keeping this system going.

How will you support my child's emotional well-being?

As we have outlined above, we are putting the emotional well-being needs of our children at the forefront of what we do. There will be plenty of opportunities for children to discuss their feelings, reflect on their experiences, play, rebuild friendships and have 'break out' or 'chill out' spaces for times when they may feel overwhelmed. We will continue to use our school values to support children's learning.

Will staff and children wear masks or PPE?

The Government has issued the following guidance;

The majority of staff in education settings will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work. PPE is only needed in a very small number of cases, including:

where an individual child or young person becomes ill with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms while at schools, and only then if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained

where a child or young person already has routine intimate care needs that involves the use of PPE, in which case the same PPE should continue to be used.

If a child, young person or other learner becomes unwell with symptoms of coronavirus while in their setting and needs direct personal care until they can return home. A fluid-resistant surgical face mask should be worn by the supervising adult if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained. If contact with the child or young person is necessary, then disposable gloves, a disposable apron and a fluid-resistant surgical face mask should be worn by the supervising adult. If a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes, for example from coughing, spitting, or vomiting, then eye protection should also be worn.'

Used PPE and any disposable face coverings that staff, children, young people or other learners arrive wearing should be placed in a refuse bag and can be disposed of as normal domestic waste unless the wearer has symptoms of coronavirus, in line with the guidance on cleaning for non-healthcare settings.

Removal of face coverings on arrival at school

Pupils must 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.

Will my child need to wear a school uniform?

Yes. Children are to return to school in uniform. Please see information on the school website for details. Children will not be allowed to bring slippers during this initial phase. 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.

What should my child bring to school each day?

Children should **only** bring

a coat

a bookbag containing the following;

sunhat

water bottle that has been sanitised and pre-filled

named sun cream (we would advise that you apply long lasting sun-cream if possible before coming to school.)

small pencil case containing writing pencils, colouring pencils, pencil sharpener and a rubber. This will be left in school

a reading book (a system will be in place from September for those children reading books from the reading scheme)

As always, please ensure that EVERYTHING is named. This is even more important than normal so we can try to ensure that children do not swap belongings.

Will my child need a PE kit?

Children in years 1-6 will need to come to school wearing their PE kit on days when PE is timetabled. This will mean that children aren't changing in school. Class teachers will let you know at the start of term when this will be for each class.

Will the breakfast club and after school club be open?

Currently we are trying to organise some form of breakfast and after school provision and will let you know as soon as we can what that will look like. This will be by the end of term but we have to arrange staffing and also how children can be safely transported from one site to the other. We will be attempting to put something in place but it may not be exactly as usual.

Will we allow volunteers into school?

Not in the short term, we would prefer to minimise additional adults coming in and out of school.

Will extra-curricular clubs run (netball club, choir club etc)?

Not this half term. These bring too many children into contact and mix the school groupings. This will be reviewed at a later date.

Will the school office be open? How will I communicate with school?

There will be no access to the office. There will be a box at the drop off zone for you to put dinner money, forms, etc. in during drop off/pick up time. We ask that you email or call school if you need to talk to a member of staff and an appointment will be made for the member of staff to either call or email you.

Will children and young people be eligible for testing for the virus?

The Government has issued the following guidance;

Schools must ensure they understand the NHS Test and Trace process and how to contact their local Public Health England health protection team. 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, and must be sent home to self-isolate if they develop them in school. 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)

Anyone who displays symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) can and should get a test. Tests can be booked online through the NHS testing and tracing for coronavirus website, or ordered by telephone via NHS 119 for those without access to the internet. Essential workers, which includes anyone involved in education or childcare, have priority access to testing.

Will teachers and other staff be able to get tested if they have symptoms?

As above

What will happen if a child in the class shows symptoms?

The Government has issued the following guidance;

Staff and pupils must not come into the school if they have symptoms, and must be sent home to self-isolate if they develop them in school. They should then plan to get tested.

What happens if there is a confirmed case of coronavirus in school?

We will follow the Government guidance set out below.

Schools must take swift action when they become aware that someone who has attended has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19). Schools should contact the local health protection team. This team will also contact schools directly if they become aware that someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) attended the school – as identified by NHS Test and Trace.

The health protection team will carry out a rapid risk assessment to confirm who has been in close contact with the person during the period that they were infectious, and ensure they are asked to self-isolate.

If schools have two or more confirmed cases within 14 days, or an overall rise in sickness absence where coronavirus (COVID-19) is suspected, they may have an outbreak, and must continue to work with their local health protection team who will be able to advise if additional action is required.

In some cases, health protection teams may recommend that a larger number of other pupils self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure – perhaps the whole site or year group. If schools are implementing controls from this list, addressing the risks they have identified and therefore reducing transmission risks, whole school closure based on cases within the school will not generally be necessary, and should not be considered except on the advice of health protection teams.

In consultation with the local Director of Public Health, where an outbreak in a school is confirmed, a mobile testing unit may be dispatched to test others who may have been in contact with the person who has tested positive. Testing will first focus on the person's class, followed by their year group, then the whole school if necessary, in line with routine public health outbreak control practice.

The health protection team will work with schools in this situation to guide them through the actions they need to take. Based on the advice from the health protection team, schools must send home those people who have been in close contact with the person who has tested positive, advising them to self-isolate for 14 days since they were last in close contact with that person when they were infectious. Close contact 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

The health protection team will provide definitive advice on who must be sent home. To support them in doing so, we recommend schools keep a record of pupils and staff in each group, and any close contact that takes places between children and staff in different groups (see section 5 of system of control for more on grouping pupils). This should be a proportionate recording process. Schools do not need to ask pupils to record everyone they have spent time with each day or ask staff to keep definitive records in a way that is overly burdensome.

A template letter will be provided to schools, on the advice of the health protection team, to send to parents and staff if needed. Schools must not share the names or details of people with coronavirus (COVID-19) unless essential to protect others.

Household members of those contacts who are sent home do not need to self-isolate themselves unless the child, young person or staff member who is self-isolating subsequently develops symptoms. If someone in a class or group that has been asked to self-isolate develops symptoms

themselves within their 14-day isolation period they should follow 'stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection'. They should get a test, and:

if the test delivers a negative result, they must remain in isolation for the remainder of the 14-day isolation period. This is because they could still develop the coronavirus (COVID-19) within the remaining days.

if the test result is positive, they should inform their setting immediately, and must isolate for at least 7 days from the onset of their symptoms (which could mean the self-isolation ends before or after the original 14-day isolation period). Their household should self-isolate for at least 14 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms, following 'stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection'

Will the school take my child's temperature every day?

No

Will there be any trips once school opens fully?

No. There are no plans to take the children out of the school grounds until further notice.

How can I speak to the class teacher if we are not allowed into school?

You can contact your child's class teacher by using the class email address. If you are unable to do this, you can email the office who will then pass the message on. parents will need to be mindful that teaching staff will not be able to respond immediately to parent emails as they will be full time with the children.

What happens if a member of staff becomes ill and cannot work?

We would employ a supply teacher who would adhere to our practices and procedures.

Why are different schools doing different things to reopen?

Individual school circumstances are different - numbers in year groups, physical space available, etc. We are working with St Christopher's MAT and following Devon guidelines to ensure that we are following the government guidance on reopening schools.

Where can I find more information about returning to school?

The Government information is provided here

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools#section-1-public-health-advice-to-minimise-coronavirus-covid-19-risks>