



Information for families for Full Re-opening in September 2020

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The government has said that from September all secondary school students should return to full-time education. The DfE guidance can be read at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

Westcountry Schools Trust has provided us with a Toolkit to aid our planning. This can be accessed on our school website at:

<https://plymstockschool.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/WeST-Full-September-Re-Opening-Toolkit-.pdf>

The logistics of this guidance to ensure that the site is kept clean, social distancing adhered to and that students receive lessons from subject specialists, means that this wider re-opening will be different from the normal school experience that our students are accustomed to; different, but there will be no compromise in the educational experience students receive or our care and support for their well-being.

This document aims to answer some of the many questions we know you may have; we will be referring throughout this document to zones – this is our word for ‘bubbles’.

September 2020 – Reconnection, Recovery and Resilience

We are really excited about the full return of all students in September, we recognise and understand the challenges that the closures of schools have brought for us all.

Recognising the impact of School Closure

- No student at Plymstock School will be made to feel they have fallen behind their peers when we fully re-open; all children have been affected and all will need personalised support and care.
- We recognise ALL our young people have had the shared disruption of our school closing or being partially closed – but will all have had very different experiences of their time at home over the last few months.
- In this context, our staff have been working to evaluate the progress and engagement of students working from home. This information is being shared with their new teachers from September to ensure we plan for them to make the best possible start and that our lessons and programmes meet their individual needs.

What will schools have to do?

The government has set out a system of controls for schools and said the following four points must happen in all schools, all the time.

- keep pupils with Covid-19 symptoms, or with family members with symptoms, away from school
- introduce more frequent hand-sanitising/handwashing



- promote good hygiene around the use of tissues for sneezes and coughs
- have enhanced cleaning procedures

It also wants schools to minimise contact between individuals and maintain social distancing wherever possible. In a large school such as Plymstock School, the DfE recognises this will not always be possible; social distancing will be enabled by the creation of Year group bubbles.

All classrooms will be re-arranged to maximise the space between students, who will be seated 'shoulder to shoulder' and facing forward.

When will Plymstock School reopen?

Providing that the Government's assessment of the risk from coronavirus remains that it is safe to do so:

- Year 7, 12 and a small number of vulnerable students will return on Monday, 7 September
- The remaining students (i.e. those in Years 8, 9, 10 and 13) will return on Tuesday, 8 September
- We will contact families directly to let them know the exact details of the times they should arrive before the start of term.

Will you reopen full-time?

Yes.

Which students can attend school?

All students. The only exceptions will be those:

- who are shielding,
- suspect that they have Covid-19
- are too ill to attend and so absent due to 'normal' reasons of ill health.

Should my child attend school?

Yes. Parents/Carers will have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child(ren) attends.

Plymstock School recognises that for some children this will be a significant challenge, but dedicated school staff will work in partnership with Parents and Carers to ensure all students can return to their full-time education and provision.

How are you preparing to reopen?

We are taking a number of steps to make sure we can open as safely as possible. In summary:

- Those who either have Covid-19 or are showing symptoms of it will not be allowed on-site.



- There will be a focus on regular and rigorous hand hygiene (washing and sanitising) and respiratory hygiene (catch it, bin it, kill it).
- There will be enhanced cleaning through the day and daily 'deep cleans' of the school.
- As far as possible students will be organised in year team groups with as little mixing as possible.

Staff and student relationships

- One of Plymstock School's greatest strengths is the relationships between adults & students and adults & adults.
- This is a fundamental part of teaching and our staff are really looking forward to welcoming all of our children back into our school; it will be different but most importantly, safe.
- The layout of our classrooms has been altered to allow social distancing. For example, additional rooms have been re-timetabled to ensure all students can face the front.
- Our focus will be on ensuring the safety and well-being of our staff and learners in this next phase and specifically on the re-engagement, nurture and support for the young people who will be in school, some for the first time after many months at home.

How will you keep my child safe?

We will be operating on the principle of year group zones (bubbles) and social distancing where possible. Whilst we cannot guarantee complete separation of year groups, we will take all reasonable steps to avoid social mixing between year groups when they are on site and maximise the potential for social distancing. **For example, the use of face coverings in corridors to allow students to move from classroom to classroom.**

- All desks will face forward, with students sitting 'shoulder to shoulder'.
- Handwashing / social distancing posters will be displayed throughout the school.
- Handwashing / sanitising will happen before entering and leaving every classroom.
- Staff will encourage regular hand washing / sanitising.
- Toilets will be sanitised regularly.
- Social distancing markers are clear throughout the school.
- Personal belongings (food, pens, books etc.) will not be shared. **Students must bring their own equipment.**
- Where subject-specific requirements mean resources must be shared, a separate risk assessment will be followed, e.g. students will sanitise hands before and after handling equipment and the equipment will be cleaned between groups.
- Doors will be propped open to minimise touching door handles, wherever fire regulations allow us to do this.
- When working in classrooms within a zone, we will be using traditional seating plans with allocated seats by subject, this will enable tracing should the need arise.



- One-way systems will be in place, where possible, to minimise movement and social mixing as students and staff move around the school.
- Each year group will have their own outdoor zone - they won't be permitted to go anywhere else:
 - Year 7 – The New 3G
 - Year 8 – The Cricket pitch
 - Year 9 – The Tennis Courts
 - Year 10 – The Old 3G
 - Year 11 – The areas in front of the Galley and Roundabout
 - Years 12 & 13 – The Sixth Form Area
- Year Groups and Tutor rooms will be organised into zones:
 - Year 7 – Humanities
 - Year 8 – Maths, Dance Studio 1 and the Library Classroom
 - Year 9 – Eco Block, The Temporary Classrooms (in front of Sixth form area), TE1 and TE10
 - Year 10 – English
 - Year 11 – Modern Foreign Languages and Drama 1 and 2
 - Year 12 & 13 – Science
- We will be operating our Galley (school canteen) to provide students with access to food with a reduced menu that can be pre-ordered.
- We will not accept visitors on site, except in emergencies.
- As far as reasonably possible, meetings will be conducted remotely via MS Teams.

Student movement around the site

Following the advice from the WHO and the DfE change on the use of face coverings in English Schools, we have as a Trust decided that:

- All secondary age students will be expected to wear a face covering in corridors and any communal areas where social distancing outside of the year group bubble is difficult.

This additional preventative measure now gives Plymstock School the opportunity for students to move across our site between lessons and access their subject specialist teachers in their rooms, rather than remaining all day in the same classroom.

However, in order to mitigate risk and follow the DfE guidance on the re-opening of schools, we will also be incorporating the following:

- A strictly enforced one-way system (i.e not passing each other F2F)
- Staff supervising lesson change over
- Teacher presence to enforce corridor behaviour (Teachers will also wear masks in corridors)
- No queuing in corridors - students will go straight in to the classroom.



- Hand sanitizer on entry to classroom before and after removing masks.
- Procedures for the removal and safe storage of masks on entry, they can't be just placed on the desks. Training our students on how to take a mask off. E.g storage, avoid touching their faces, not touching their mouths.

Other measures remain unchanged, we will still be using:

- Separate year group bubbles where students are registered; returning at break and lunch to their year group areas.
- Separate pastoral year team bases, our pastoral base the HUB will remain closed to students from different year groups.
- Staggered start times
- Monitoring of children at break and lunch by Senior Leadership Team, duty staff, members of our pastoral team and at lunch by Meal Time Assistants
- The Galley will remain closed to students, however, will be operating our Galley (school canteen) to provide students with access to food with a reduced menu that can be pre-ordered. Please see the letter here for details: <https://plymstockschool.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/School-Meal-Ordering-27-August.pdf>

Student timetables:

- The timetable for 20/21 is completed and fully staffed, however, due to the staggered start and finish times they may look slightly different.
- To reduce any anxiety for students and Parents/Carers we have decided to publish these documents on the first day back in September during the Tutor time.
- This will enable tutors and senior staff to explain the differences to their tutees.

Will there be increased cleaning?

Yes. Prior to the phased re-opening the school will be thoroughly 'deep cleaned'.

We will also be increasing cleaning throughout the school day. This will include:

- Touch points, such as handrails and door handles
- Toilets
- Emptying of bins
- Desks and other surfaces

Will children be social distancing?

As far as is reasonably possible. The DfE recognises that schools cannot maintain full social distancing if all students are on site. We will take all reasonable action to minimise extended, close contact between students. For example:

- All classrooms will be re-arranged to maximise the space between students, who will be seated 'shoulder to shoulder' and facing forward.



- We will run assemblies using MS Teams so that large groups of students do not need to gather in close proximity.
- As far as is reasonably possible, staff will ensure that students observe distancing when queuing is unavoidable.
- All secondary age pupils will be expected to wear a face covering in corridors and any communal areas where social distancing outside of the year group bubble is difficult.

How will students and teachers be protected?

No one with Covid-19 symptoms will be allowed on site. If someone develops symptoms whilst on site, they will be isolated until arrangements have been made for them to leave safely and as quickly as possible.

We have PPE available for staff .

First Aid procedures

These have been adapted for Covid-19 and, in the event of a non Covid-19 emergency, our team of staff will contact you and make arrangements for you to collect your child, should this eventuality occur.

Similarly, this applies if there is a need for support with any prescribed medication.

If you have any questions, please contact your child's Head of Year/Assistant Head of Year/Tutor or please email info@plymstockschool.org.uk

What will my child be learning?

Our aim is to deliver a curriculum that is as close as possible to that which we would offer if there were no Covid-19 to consider. Practical subjects will need to make some adjustments to the activities that they offer in order to be Covid-19 secure.

The autumn term will need to be seen as a series of phases, with phase 1 being the first 2-3 weeks. In this phase the most important aspect is to ensure all students and staff adjust and adapt to the new on-site arrangements.

As we move forward, we will continually risk-assess, adding more aspects that we would have provided without Covid-19, for example, after-school study support. This is most likely to follow the first phase as the first extra-curricular activity.

The main aim of the DfE guidance and our application is to ensure the school stays open and, if and when we have a confirmed case, only the students in the affected zone will need to self-isolate.

For this reason, we are also planning how we would move back to remote teaching for those students to ensure they continue to receive a high-quality, educational offer.

How will you stop my child mixing with other children in other zones once the school day is finished?



Sadly, once students have left our site, we have no authority other than to remind them of the need for social distancing. It is vitally important that Parents and Carers communicate this message clearly to their children.

Social distancing as students travel to and from school remains the responsibility of Parents and Carers.

However, like you, we recognise that in some situations this is impossible, for example, siblings who live in the same household and students travelling to school on public transport.

In all cases we have done everything we can to consider each situation and apply a practical way that mitigates the risk by removing the possibility for students mixing as much as we can on site.

Could schools close again?

Currently, health officials have advised that a whole school closure "will not generally be necessary" as the Education Secretary Gavin Williamson has said there is little evidence of coronavirus being transmitted in schools. We will of course closely monitor any further DfE and Public Health England updates on the advice for the safe re-opening of schools.

If a school has a suspected coronavirus outbreak, we will liaise with local health teams.

It is likely, as with other areas of the country that have experienced a spike in infections, that a mobile testing unit may arrive - focusing first on those in the affected child or teacher's class, followed by their year group, and then the whole school if necessary.

If students can't come in, schools are expected to have a home-working plan ready to go. We have our own plans for a coronavirus spike and are prepared should we need to re-launch remote or distance learning for any period of time. This process has been refined based on feedback from students, staff, and parents and carers in the summer term, to ensure we provide the highest quality offer of remote teaching and learning.

What are the risks of opening schools?

You will be aware from both UK Government briefings and press articles in the last four weeks that rising coronavirus infections suggest England is "near the limit" of opening up, as stated by the chief medical officer.

This means there may be trade-offs in the coming weeks and further announcements from the DfE and UK Government Health agencies, to ensure children can safely return to school.

It has been stated this is because schools will "reconnect lots of households", so closing other networks may be required. It is therefore being stressed that we all need to follow the UK Government advice outside of school to maintain everyone's safety and well-being, to ensure schools remain both safe and open, particularly with regard to social distancing and the mixing of year groups where practicable.

How is the Department of Education (DfE) supporting parents?

On Monday 17 August government launched its **#backtoschoolsafely** campaign to reassure parents and students that schools and colleges are ready for their return in September.

Parents are encouraged to visit www.gov.uk/backtoschool for information and practical guidance to help them plan for their child's return to school.



How should my child get to school?

Government advice is that students should, as far as possible, walk or cycle to school.

If you are planning to drop your child off by car, please be aware that there will be no vehicle access for Parents and Carers.

Please be considerate to our neighbours, other road users and pedestrians if dropping your child off in Church Road and Lands Park.

Please refer to Stagecoach and Plymouth Citybus regarding their services.

Please remember that face coverings are now a legal requirement on public transport. (See section below for more detail.)

Will my child have to wear uniform?

Yes. Students will be expected to wear normal uniform from September.

They will also need to be responsible for having the correct equipment and ensuring that they bring the correct exercise books to each lesson.

Students will wear PE kit to school on the day this is timetabled.

Government advice now states, *“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.”*

Does my child have to wear a face covering?

On 21 August, the World Health Organisation (WHO) updated their advice on when children over the age of 12 should wear face coverings. The WHO now advise that “children aged 12 and over should wear a mask under the same conditions as adults, in particular when they cannot guarantee at least a 1-metre distance from others and there is widespread transmission in the area”.

As a result, the government has revised the guidance on face coverings for staff and children in Year 7 or above in England. From 1 September new advice will apply to the use of face coverings by staff and pupils in school years 7 or above and learners in further education in England.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-in-education/face-coverings-in-education>

Plymstock School and WeST schools have adopted a wide range of protective measures to reduce the transmission risk of COVID-19. However, despite these measures, there are still occasions, specifically in secondary school settings, where social distancing is difficult, such as in corridors or busy communal areas.

You will find full details in the **WeST Guidance on Face Coverings in Secondary Schools** on our dedicated page here: <https://plymstockschool.org.uk/re-opening-september-2020/>

Our aim here is to provide a further layer of protection to both pupils and staff.

- **All secondary age pupils will be expected to wear a face covering in corridors and any communal areas where social distancing outside of the year group bubble is difficult.**

This approach to face coverings has been supported by Plymouth City Council, yesterday the Plymouth City Director of Public Health and Director of Childrens’ Services wrote to all Plymouth



Schools strongly recommending that face coverings are worn in communal areas in secondary settings.

Face coverings do not need to be worn:

- By any students who is exempt (please see the exemption guidance for further information).
- By students or teachers in the classroom or during lessons, but both are still free to do so if they wish.
- Whilst consuming food and drink at break and lunch times.
- Whilst students are mixing with students within their own year group bubble only.

Public Transport

Please remember that face coverings are now a legal requirement on public transport. All secondary age pupils travelling to and from school via public transport or school transport will be expected to wear a face covering and follow all appropriate hygiene measures required by the respective companies.

It is recommended that re-usable face coverings are washed on a daily basis. Whichever type of face covering is used, it should be removed with care and your child should wash or sanitise their hands afterwards.

WeST staff and secondary age pupils should bring their own face coverings to school as they would for use on public transport, shops, and wider society. If any individual forgets to bring a face covering to school, a disposable mask will be provided.

You will find a copy of the **WeST Guidance on Face Coverings in Secondary Schools** on our website.

Will you provide lunch for my child?

Where possible we encourage you to send your child with a drink, snacks and a packed lunch from home.

Lunch will be provided for students who are eligible for Free School Meals.

We will be operating our Galley (school canteen) to provide students with access to food with a reduced menu that can be pre-ordered.

This is purely a practicable step, as we are unable to carry out the necessary cleaning between each zone accessing the Galley to ensure that all students can have access to food in a timely and fair manner.

Secondly, this decision has been taken to minimise queuing and mitigate the risk of a large gathering within a confined space.

We will review this decision in the first stage of re-opening until all students and staff are familiar with the new systems.

Details on the pre-ordering on our dedicated page here: <https://plymstockschool.org.uk/re-opening-september-2020/>

Will my child be able to use outside space?



- Yes, they will be able to go outside during breaks and lunch. Each year group will have their own outdoor zone - they won't be permitted to go anywhere else:
 - Year 7 – The New 3G
 - Year 8 – The Cricket pitch
 - Year 9 – The Tennis Courts
 - Year 10 – The Old 3G
 - Year 11 – The areas in front of the Galley and Roundabout
 - Years 12 & 13 – The Sixth Form Area


Students will sanitise their hands when they leave and re-enter classrooms.

I've received a letter from the NHS saying I should be shielding. Does my child have to attend?

Yes, unless the letter specifically states that members of your household must also shield. **Please email info@plymstockschool.org** if you are shielding.

My child is unwell. Should they attend?

No. No one, staff or students, exhibiting any symptoms, to include coughing and/or fever, should attend.

They remain at home for the period of isolation. 

What should I do if I suspect my child, or someone else in my household, has Covid-19?

DO NOT SEND THEM TO SCHOOL.

The DfE/PHE guidance is that if a pupil/staff member displays symptoms

If anyone 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 the **STAY AT HOME GUIDANCE for households with possible coronavirus (COVID-19) infection** or **COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection**

IN ALL CASES

Seek and follow the latest government advice.

- Currently, this would be to arrange a Covid-19 test and to isolate whilst awaiting the result, after which you must follow the guidance of the NHS 'Test and Trace' team.
- If someone tests negative, if they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus (Covid-19), they can stop self-isolating.



- They could still have another virus, such as a cold or flu – in which case it is still best to avoid contact with other people until they are better. Other members of their household can stop self-isolating.
- If someone tests positive, they should follow the [‘stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection’](#) and must continue to self-isolate for at least 7 days from the onset of their symptoms and then return to school only if they do not have symptoms other than cough or loss of sense of smell/taste

There are health vulnerabilities in my family home. Should my child attend?

Government advice states they are fine to attend and pose minimal risk.

We have been contacted by the ‘track and trace’ system and advised to self-isolate. Can my child attend?

No. You should all remain at home for the period of isolation.

In addition, we would request that you contact the school and share this information so we can take advice from PHE and assess the risk to other students and staff who may be affected.

Will remote ‘distance / online learning’ continue?

No, as all students are expected to attend school. The only exception will be for students who are shielding, for whom we will make appropriate arrangements.

However, if the school has to close, e.g. due to a local lockdown in Plymouth, we have a contingency plan in place to revert back to online learning.

Reducing (mitigating) Risk

For Plymstock School we have taken all reasonable and practicable steps to mitigate the risks as much as possible to limit interaction, for example the sharing of rooms and social spaces between groups as much as possible.

The system of controls: **Protective measures**

Prevention (5) of the DfE guidance states we need to minimise contact between individuals and maintain social distancing wherever possible.

As a school we have properly and fully considered this and put in place measures that suit our particular circumstances.

The overarching principle that we have been asked to apply is reducing the number of contacts between children and staff. The guidance has stated this once again can be achieved through keeping groups in separate zones (in ‘bubbles’) and through maintaining distance between individuals.



Keeping you up to date and informed

Further specific details will be released from the week commencing **24 August** to students, Parents and Carers using our MyEd Direct Contact App, Show My Homework (SMHW), email, a dedicated page on our school website and our school website newsfeed.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all Parents and Carers for your support throughout this period of time. Your patience and understanding, as well as feedback, has been very much appreciated.

What should I do if I have questions?

During the summer holiday:

If you have questions, please email using: info@plymstockschool.org.uk and these will be directed to a member of staff to answer.

From Monday 7 September

On Thursday 3 and Friday 4 September staff will be completing in school preparations and induction training for the wider re-opening and receiving training on our new on site procedures.

From Thursday 3rd September, staff will be available to answer queries and will respond in the normal timeframe of 3 working days but in most cases, they will try to answer queries on that day. Due to the training being completed, it is possible they may not be able to reply until Monday 7 September.

If you have subject-specific questions, please email your child's teacher. If your question is about your child's wellbeing then please contact their tutor, Assistant Head of Year or Head of Year.

Heads of Year / Assistant Heads of Year

Year 7

Mrs Miranda Kirk, Head of Year 7: MKirk@plymstockschool.org.uk

Mr Phil Chivers, Assistant Head of Year 7: PChivers@plymstockschool.org.uk

Year 8

Mrs Cheryle Robb, Head of Year 8: CRobb@plymstockschool.org.uk

Ms Claire Offer, Assistant Head of Year 8: COffer@plymstockschool.org.uk

Year 9

Mr Simon Wookey, Head of Year 9: SWookey@plymstockschool.org.uk

Miss Sally Holton, Assistant Head of Year 9: SHolton@plymstockschool.org.uk

Year 10

Mr David Wyatt, Head of Year 10: DWyatt@plymstockschool.org.uk



Mr Anthony Dott, Assistant Head of Year 10: ADott@plymstockschool.org.uk

Year 11:

Mrs Sophie Harris, Head of Year 11: SHarris@plymstockschool.org.uk

Mrs Sam Smith, Assistant Head of Year 11: SSmith@plymstockschool.org.uk

Safeguarding

Safeguarding issues should be raised with our Designated Safeguarding Lead, **Leeshia Walton**,
Mobile: 07950336841, email: safeguarding@plymstockschool.org.uk

If you have specific questions with regard to your child's learning, please email:

Mrs Louise Duff, DIRECTOR OF LEARNING for Years 7, 8 & 9: LDuff@plymstockschool.org.uk

Mr Mark Taylor, DIRECTOR OF LEARNING for Years 10 & 11: MATaylor@plymstockschool.org.uk

Miss Liz Monelle, DIRECTOR OF POST-16: EMonelle@plymstockschool.org.uk