



BISHOP VAUGHAN
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

27th August 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are thoroughly looking forward to welcoming our pupils back to school in September and would like to provide you with the following information to help you prepare for the new term:

1. Preparation Days and Phased Return

The Welsh Government has made provision for schools to place preparation days at the start of term, to update all staff including non-teaching staff on the arrangements for the term ahead and with regard to the risk assessments for their schools. At Bishop Vaughan, our preparation days will be on Tuesday 1st and Wednesday 2nd September. There will then be a phased return of year groups until 14th September, as explained in my letter to you of 17th July. The first fortnight of term will be as follows:

Tuesday 1 st September:	Staff Preparation Day
Wednesday 2 nd September:	Staff Preparation Day
Thursday 3 rd September:	Year 7 and Year 12
Friday 4 th September:	Year 7, Year 11 and Year 13
Monday 7 th September:	Year 7, Year 10 and Year 12
Tuesday 8 th September:	Year 10, Year 11, Year 12 and Year 13
Wednesday 9 th September:	Year 8, Year 9, Year 10, Year 11 and Year 12
Thursday 10 th September:	Year 7, Year 8, Year 9, Year 11 and Year 13
Friday 11 th September:	All year groups

All pupils will be in school from Monday 14th September onwards.

2. Health and Safety

As you will be aware, we have been working extensively to prepare for the return to school in September, ensuring that all risk assessments are prepared, adapted and continually updated to reflect the very latest guidance. This has meant making changes within and around the school. Your child will be guided through all of the new arrangements during the induction fortnight outlined above.

We have worked hard to ensure that the number of contacts for your child is reduced in order to mitigate the level of risk to your child, and by extension, to you and your families. Areas of the school have been designated for specific year groups, and where possible, teachers will travel between classrooms rather than pupils doing so to reduce the numbers circulating in the school corridors, which would otherwise potentially have been congested. Pupils in Years 7-9, therefore, as encouraged in the Welsh Government guidance, will have their own classroom base to which their teachers will arrive each lesson. The exceptions to these teaching spaces will be for PE and other practical lessons. We hope that this will provide you and your child with a level of reassurance regarding their school experience next term.

In addition, there will be:

- Sanitising stations on entry to the school site, around the school and in every classroom.
- Frequent cleaning taking place throughout the school day, in particular of high touch areas such as door handles.
- Sanitisation of shared spaces such as computer resources and the Sixth Form Study Centre between users.
- Rearranging of all pupil desks to face the front of the room in line with current Welsh Government guidance.
- A one way system in operation around the school buildings and site.
- Designated entrances and drop-off zones for each year group to further reduce the mixing of year groups. **The details regarding the drop off zone for your child will be communicated to you separately.**

While the above is clearly entirely necessary to protect the health and the safety of all within the school, and no doubt will be welcomed by all as reassuring in this time of uncertainty, the school will look and feel very different for pupils and for that reason all staff will work to help your child in becoming familiar with the new arrangements and to make the return to school a positive experience for all of our pupils.

Please be aware that, following yesterday's announcement from the Welsh Government relating to the use of face masks within school settings, there will be a further communication to parents shortly to provide clarity on this issue.

3. Illness

The current Public Health Wales advice states,

“Under no circumstances should learners attend schools/settings if they:

- feel unwell, or have any of the three identified COVID-19 symptoms (a new continuous cough, or a high temperature or loss of or change to their sense of taste or smell)
- or if they have tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 7 days
- or if they live in a household or are part of an extended household with someone who has symptoms of COVID-19 or who has tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 14 days.”

If anyone becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature whilst in school, they will be sent home and advised to follow the stay at home guidance: (<https://gov.wales/self-isolation-stay-home-guidance-households-possiblecoronavirus>)

If a pupil is awaiting collection, they will be moved to a designated room and supported by a member of staff in full PPE should they require direct support.

4. The School Day

The start and finish times of the school day remain unaltered. Importantly, however, the school gates will not be opened until **8.30am**. This is to ensure supervised sanitisation on entry to school.

Within the day, lunchtimes and breaktimes have been staggered to reduce the numbers of pupils in corridors and communal spaces at any given time, and to allow for cleaning of communal spaces such as dining areas between users. There will also be staggered lesson times to align with the above and to ensure lower numbers in the corridors and stairwells for those who will be moving between classes.

5. Catering and School Meals

As is the case in schools throughout Swansea, there will be no catering provision during the first fortnight of term. All pupils will need to bring a drink and a packed lunch, including those entitled to free school meals, until at least Monday 14th September. In recognition of this need, the Local Authority is continuing the payments/ food parcel arrangement with those families entitled to free school meals. Arrangements for catering and meal provision within school after this date will be circulated to you shortly.

6. Pupil Attendance

The Local Authority expects that all pupils will attend fully from Monday 14th September, as the current Welsh Government guidance states that, 'All learners will return to their school in the autumn term unless they have a medical/health reason not to'. We understand that some parents will, in the current climate, have concerns about their child attending school and encourage you to contact us to discuss these and so that we can provide support as needed.

Please continue to notify us in the usual way if your child is unable to attend, providing the reason for absence via phone on **0844 239 3548** or text on **07624 816 695**. This will enable us to record attendance accurately. Please see the information in section 3 ('Illness') for additional guidance about the symptoms which would necessitate your child being kept at home.

7. Uniform and Equipment

Details of the school uniform can be found by following the link on this page:
<https://www.bishopvaughan.co.uk/school-uniform>

In addition, pupils will need to bring the following equipment to school each day:

- Pen
- Pencils
- Coloured pencils
- Pencil sharpener
- Ruler
- Eraser
- Calculator
- Compass, protractor and set square for Years 7 to 11

A number of school laptops were loaned to pupils during the period of school closure and we hope that these were a support in ensuring continuity of learning. Whilst most of these have now been returned, for those who have not already done so, we ask that they are returned on the first day of your child's return to school.

8. Transport

Any queries related to school transport should be directed to the Local Authority Transport Team directly, who will be able to provide the most up-to-date advice. They can be contacted on 01792 636347.

9. Acts of Worship

While there will be no large gatherings such as assemblies until the guidance indicates that this is appropriate and safe, daily acts of worship will continue in the classroom settings, and in addition there will be virtual assemblies provided by senior staff that will be viewed within the classroom settings.

10. Keeping Up-To-Date

As you will already be aware, the guidance for schools is constantly being updated to reflect the changing national picture with regard to the pandemic. We will continue to post all updates here: <https://www.bishopvaughan.co.uk/covid019-information> and on our social media accounts, and ask that you check these regularly for news and information.

11. Contacting Us

Although Bishop Vaughan usually operates an open door policy, with parents/guardians being welcome to come into the school to discuss concerns at any time, during the current pandemic we regret that this will not be possible. Please contact the Head of Year or the Student Services team if you have any queries or would like to arrange to speak with other specific staff.

With our sincere thanks for the ways in which you have supported the school in preparing for the new term, such as your messages to staff and in your discussions as a family to prepare your child for September. We are looking forward to welcoming our pupils and wish you and your family well for the academic year ahead –

Yours faithfully,



Mrs E Pole
Headteacher