



# PONTARDDULAIS COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL YSGOL GYFUN PONTARDDULAIS

Headteacher: Mr. G. Rees  
Headship Team: Mr. D. Jenkins, Mr. A. Owens, Miss. N. Miles, Miss. R. Thomas



Caecerrig Road, Pontarddulais, Swansea SA4 8PD • Tel 01792 884556 Fax 01792 884658  
Heol Caecerrig, Pontarddulais, Abertawe SA4 8PD • Ffon 01792 884556 Ffacs 01792 884658  
info@pontcomp.co.uk

**Friday 28<sup>th</sup> August 2020**

## **Updated arrangement for the new academic year 2020-21**

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope you and your family have been able to enjoy the summer break. We are looking forward to welcoming pupils back to school in September. Having recently received current national guidance and liaised with the local authority with regard to safeguarding we are now able to confirm arrangements for the new term. As I stated last term we can all collectively take pride in how we have worked together to support not just our pupils but the wider community during the coronavirus pandemic. Please be assured that there is no complacency at Pontarddulais Comprehensive. Even though the local transmission rates are very low we are acutely aware that things can change quickly, as has happened in other parts of the UK.

Our overriding priority remains keeping pupils and staff as safe as possible whilst building on our strong tradition of excellent pupil outcomes through high quality teaching and learning. The two days planning and preparation days, at the start of term therefore have been planned to achieve both these objectives. Staff at Pontarddulais are excited and eager to build on a strong blended learning provision developed rapidly over recent months. This will have a lasting and sustained impact on pupils' independent learning, which resonates with the school's motto 'learn to live...live to learn'. In the unfortunate scenario of another forced school closure the blended learning programme will become the crucial tool for pupils' continuity of learning.

### **Arrangements for September 2020**

As you already know the national expectation is that all pupils should be back in school by September 14<sup>th</sup>. The rationale behind a phased return is to evaluate our risk assessments, on a daily basis, and to build confidence in pupils and staff with regard to the safeguarding measures in place. All pupils should be back in school by Wednesday September 9<sup>th</sup> onwards. The phased return plan is below:

- **Tuesday September 1<sup>st</sup>** : Staff only – Planning and preparation days;
- **Wednesday September 2<sup>nd</sup>** : Staff only – Planning and preparation days;
- **Thursday September 3<sup>rd</sup>** : Year 7 and 11 pupils attend;
- **Friday September 4<sup>th</sup>** : Year 7 and Year 11 pupils attend;



- **Monday September 7<sup>th</sup>** : Year 7, Year 10 and Year 11 pupils attend;
- **Tuesday September 8<sup>th</sup>** : Year 7, Year 9, Year 10 and Year 11 pupils attend;
- **Wednesday September 9<sup>th</sup>** : Year 7, Year 8 ,Year 9, Year 10 and Year 11 pupils attend.

We look forward to welcoming Year 7 pupils who would have unfortunately missed out on the usual transition week. Having less pupils in school on their arrival should help with their induction into the school community.

September will be quite different to the ‘catch-up, check-in and prepare’ sessions pupils experienced at the end of the summer term. The two main changes are:

1. All pupils are to attend in September, after the phased return.
2. There is no longer a requirement for pupils to socially distance by 2m, within their contact group (year group).

For these reasons the planned changes for September focus on the segregation of contact groups, this will include:

- Staggered lunch time
- Staggered end of day
- Outside areas designated for specific contact groups: <https://pontcomp.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Outside-zones-min.jpg>
- Staff are required to continue to socially distance by 2 metres
- Contact groups will be designated specific toilets
- New timings of the day to allow for staggered lunch times and transfer time between lessons using the school’s new one-way system.

To allow for these safeguarding and logistical changes the internal timings of the day have altered slightly though the start and end of the day remain the same:

Year 7, 8 & 10	Time	Year 9 & 11	Time
Registration	8.30-8.40 am	Registration	8.30-8.40 am
Transfer time	5 minutes	Transfer time	5 minutes
Lesson 1	8.45-9.45 am	Lesson 1	8.45-9.45 am
Break (in L1 classroom)	9.45-10.00 am	Break (in L1 classroom)	9.45-10.00 am
Transfer time	5 minutes	Transfer time	5 minutes
Lesson 2	10.05-11.05 am	Lesson 2	10.05-11.05 am
Transfer time	5 minutes	Transfer time	5 minutes
Lesson 3	11.10-12.10 pm	Lesson 3	11.10-12.10 pm
Lunch (40 mins)	12.10-12.50 pm	Transfer time	5 minutes
Transfer time	5 minutes	Lesson 4	12.15-1.15 pm
Lesson 4	12.55-1.55 pm	Lunch (40 mins)	1.15-1.55 pm
Transfer time	5 minutes	Transfer time	5 minutes
Lesson 5	2.00-3.00 pm	Lesson 5	2.00-3.00 pm

If you pick up your child from school please be mindful of the staggered end of the day:

<b>Year 7:</b>	2:48 pm
<b>Year 8:</b>	2:51 pm
<b>Year 9:</b>	2:54 pm
<b>Year 10:</b>	2:57 pm
<b>Year 11:</b>	3:00 pm

We shall continue to evaluate these timings in order to get the balance right between maximising pupils learning time in class and avoiding the merging of year groups on leaving the school.

On their first day Year 7 pupils will be welcomed on the main drive by a member of staff and will be shown to their form room. Year 8 to 11 pupils should follow the one-way system to their form rooms. The updated list of form tutors and rooms can be [found here](#).

Home-school transport will continue to be provided by the local authority from Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September. Please note current guidance requires pupils to wear face coverings whilst travelling on home-school transport. The most current guidance regarding safeguarding measures and other arrangements can be found here:

<https://www.swansea.gov.uk/schooltransport>

If you have any further transport queries please contact the Council's School Transport Team:

Email: [School.transport@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:School.transport@swansea.gov.uk)

Phone: 01792 636347/636348

The Welsh Government now recommends the use of face coverings/masks for people aged 11 and above indoors where social distancing cannot be maintained, including in schools and on school transport. Pupils should therefore wear face coverings in corridors, when queuing for lunch and on home-school transport. The reason for this is that social distancing between contact groups in these areas of the school is more difficult to achieve. As pupils will be removing and replacing the face covering throughout the day it is advisable to store it in a sterilised plastic bag (ideally zip-locked) to support the hygiene of your child. Your support in this matter would be greatly appreciated. Handmade washable face coverings/masks will be available for purchase from school (£3/£4 for child/adult), and all proceeds will be used to support our community through Pontarddulais Partnership (registered charity). More information can be found here:

<https://www.facebook.com/CanolfanYBont28/posts/3413095142075378>



Normal uniform rules will return in September in line with national guidance; details and a reminder of the school's uniform policy can be found here:

<https://pontcomp.co.uk/uniform/>. The uniform suppliers, Bergoni, have recently contacted the school explaining they are currently unable to meet the current demand for a variety of reasons. Therefore, if you are experiencing difficulties purchasing uniform for your child's start date please inform the school by email, which will be forwarded onto your child's Progress Manager who can arrange a period of grace whilst appropriate uniform can be arranged.

We have been advised in recent guidance that pupils will not be allowed to access the changing rooms in a PE lesson, due to a lack of ventilation. Pupils will be allowed to wear their school PE kit for the day where they have a timetabled PE lesson.

As explained in July's letter from the Director of Education "School meals will restart on 14<sup>th</sup> September. Until that time all pupils will need to bring a packed lunch for the first two weeks of term." Pupils will also have a 15 minute break during the morning session. They have the option of either staying in their lesson 1 classroom or using a designated outside space. The vending machine will not be available during the first fortnight.

Naturally, you may have concerns regarding sending your child back to school, we shall do our very best to mitigate against the potential transmission of Covid-19 in school but we cannot guarantee a risk-free environment . I hope you find the section below taken from a recent statement from the UK Chief Medical Officer reassuring:

"We are confident that multiple sources of evidence show that a lack of schooling increases inequalities, reduces the life chances of children and can exacerbate physical and mental health issues. School improves health, learning, socialisation and opportunities throughout the life course including employment. It has not been possible to reduce societal inequalities through the provision of home-based education alone. School attendance is very important for children and young people.

We are confident in the extensive evidence that there is an exceptionally small risk of children of primary or secondary school age dying from COVID-19. The infection fatality rate (proportion of those who are infected who die) for those aged 5 to 14 is estimated at 14 per million, lower than for most seasonal flu infections. Every death of a child is a tragedy but COVID-19 deaths in children and teenagers are fortunately extremely rare and almost all deaths are in children with significant pre-existing health conditions."

The whole statement can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/statement-from-the-uk-chief-medical-officers-on-schools-and-childcare-reopening>



The school will be adhering to the Swansea Council's risk assessment policy, in conjunction with Welsh Government guidance. The school retains the right to review its provision in line with guidance and make amendments to its risk assessment policy when and where necessary.

You must not send in your child if they are exhibiting any Covid-19 related symptoms (flu like symptoms, a continuous cough, high temperature, loss of taste and/ or smell). If any pupils develop symptoms during the day, parents/carers will be contacted and expected to pick up their child immediately. Everyone must be aware that the risk of spreading Covid-19 cannot be totally mitigated.

Thank you for your patience and support through what has been a challenging and turbulent few months. Apologies for such a lengthy letter. This and additional information including frequently asked questions (FAQs), in a more readable format, can be found here:

<https://pontcomp.co.uk/return-to-school-september-2020/>

Please contact the school if you have any additional questions. By working together, we can give every child the best opportunity to succeed and collectively keep the Covid-19 transmission rate as low as we can in our wider community. We as a school shall continue to support you and your family as much as we can. Finally, I hope your child is looking forward to returning to school, meeting their friends and continuing to apply a growth mindset to their learning.

Yours sincerely,



Mr. Gareth Rees

Headteacher

