**IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING SCHOOL OPENING IN SEPTEMBER**

As we reach the end of a long and challenging term, I want to thank you all for your ongoing support. Since the announcement by Kirsty Williams, the Welsh Government Education Minister last week regarding a return to school for all statutory-age pupils by 14th September, we have been planning how that will look for our pupils. Following the guidance issued this week by the Welsh Government, and considering comprehensive health and safety advice, along with direction from the Local Authority, the Head Teachers of the Castell Alun cluster met yesterday to agree key elements of our plan. We thank you for your patience and hope you understand what a complex process this has been. We know that you have been waiting for information and can now share the most important elements with you. Please be assured that further planning is to be done and that as we move through the Summer and into the Autumn term, we will be guided by the latest directives.

This is what we know so far:

**Arrangements for September 2020**

In light of the high potential for changes between now and September, the Local Authority have supported a model schedule for schools to reopen to ensure the safety of our children and wider community. This will:

* Allow all staff to be updated with the latest version of the whole school risk assessment.
* Allow all staff to be updated with the latest health and safety procedures.
* Allow for familiarisation of site and zones of the school building.
* Preparation of the building and zones to ensure health and safety practices are adhered to.
* Preparation of the curriculum for the ‘new normal’ in September.
* Ensure that staff are fully briefed on individual circumstances and are thoroughly prepared with resources to ensure that your child’s wellbeing is paramount upon their return to school.

This is an approach which is being followed by all schools in the Castell Alun Cluster and the majority of Flintshire Schools. The reopening will be carried out in phases and will begin with the return of teachers and staff between 1 and 4 of September so that necessary preparations can be made. **No pupils will be attending school on these dates.**

In addition to the above, we have also been notified yesterday that due to a delay (Covid 19 related!) in obtaining vital building supplies, the proposed building work due to take place on the school site over the Summer may have a completion date of September 4th.

**Therefore, the school will now open to pupils on Monday 7th September.**

**Mitigating the Risk of Covid 19 at Ysgol Derwen**

From reading the Welsh Government guidance and discussions with the Local Authority, the main messages about reducing the transmission rate of Covid 19 in our school will be:

* Teaching the children good respiratory hygiene
* Teaching the children good hand hygiene
* Frequent school cleaning regimes
* Reducing the number of contacts the children and adults encounter during the school day.

What can you do to help reduce the transmission rate?

* Over the summer, reinforce good respiratory hygiene via “Catch it, Kill it, Bin it.”
* Over the summer, continue to reinforce good hand hygiene techniques.
* As Claire Homard, Flintshire Local Authority, stated in her recent letter:

“*We are asking parents to check that their child is not showing any symptoms of* ***Coronavirus*** *or* ***any other illness*** *before sending them into school. With the new arrangements in place to manage learners safely, schools will not have the capacity to look after lots of children who become unwell with the usual childhood ailments during the day and make calls for pupils to be collected. For this reason, we are asking parents/carers to make the decision in the morning whether or not they should attend rather than send them in and ‘see how they go’. This will help to keep the numbers of poorly pupils to an absolute minimum.”*

We would therefore kindly ask if any member of your family has to have a Covid 19 test, your child should not be sent into school until the results are known.

What can the school do to help reduce the transmission rate?

* Teach, reinforce and model good hand and respiratory hygiene. Signs around the school will reinforce these messages.
* Increased level of cleaning at the school.
* Class sizes are either 30 or below where possible.
* In the juniors, all desks will be forward facing and the teachers will have their own 2 metre distance demarcated within each room.
* We envisage that school dinners will be served within the classrooms and eaten at each child’s desk, however, this is subject to change.
* We will be staggering the start and end of the school day to allow safe entry and exit to the school without having large numbers of children and adults present at the same time.
* These will be the 4 contact groups within the school and we will have separate break and lunch times.
* Contact Groups:
  + Group 1 - Year 5 and 6
  + Group 2 -Year 3 and 4
  + Group 3 - Year 1 and 2
  + Group 4 - Reception and Nursery

**Temperature Checks and Illness**

Temperature checks will not be taken before entering the school. However, we are relying on parents to be sensible and take their child’s temperature if your child starts to complain that they are unwell before the start of the school day. Children should not be in school if they are showing **ANY** signs of illness and we ask for your understanding with this over the next term at least. Remember – this is for the good of the whole school community and indeed the community as a whole.

Please make sure you a contactable throughout the school day to collect your child if phoned by any member of staff and informed your child is unwell.

***It is very important that you inform the school of any changes to phone numbers/ email addresses etc. so that school records can be kept up to date.***

***Most communication from September will be through email.***

We have thermometers in school and will contact parents should your child fall ill during the day.

**Start of Term Dates:**

**Year 1 to Year 6**

**From Monday September 7th ALL pupils in Years 1 to 6 will start full time.**

**Reception Class**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 7th September | Group 1 (Surnames A to F) |
| 8th September | Group 2(Surnames G to Z) |
| 9th September | Group 1(Surnames A to F) |
| 10th September | Group 2(Surnames G to Z) |
| 11th September | From Friday September 11th, ALL children in Reception will start Full Time |

**Nursery**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 14th September | Group 1(Surnames A to J) |
| 15th September | Group 2(Surnames K to Z) |
| 16th September | Group 1(Surnames A to J) |
| 17th September | Group 2(Surnames K to Z) |
| 18th September | From Friday September 18th, ALL children in Nursery will start Morning Sessions |

More information about the beginning and end of day collection arrangements will be conveyed to you in a letter sent before the start of the children arriving next term.

**School Uniform and PE Kits**

The wearing of school uniform will be reinstated from Monday 7th September.

We aim to promote safe hygiene practices, therefore, we encourage you to change your child’s uniform daily where possible.

*How can we help with this?*

Please do not feel that you have to purchase a branded uniform with a school logo. Jumpers, cardigans and polo shirts in school colours are fine.

There will be no need to send in PE kits at the start of term. The school will likely ask for these to be sent to school within the first two weeks, but this will be confirmed at the beginning of the academic year.

**School Dinners**

It is not known at this stage what Newydd will be able to cater for in September, it is hoped that they will be able to resume school dinners, but details will not be available until closer to the start of the new academic year. We do know that there won’t be a school meal price increase. Of course, Free School Meals to eligible pupils will still be provided in school.

If your child is having sandwiches, please make sure that the sandwiches are in a plastic wipeable lunchbox and NOT in a fabric packaging.

**Pencil cases and School Bags**

Children will be allowed to bring in their own equipment for class use. This is for their personal use only and not to be shares with their friends and peers. Bags and coats will be kept in the class at their desk space. Please try to keep the amount of equipment and bag sizes to a minimum.

Google classroom will continue to be used to communicate with our children for homework etc.

**Breakfast and After School Club**

As you know, our Little Acorns and Kinnerton Kids Club staff are currently furloughed. We also know that there are families who need the clubs to be opened in order to support parents return to work. Guidance on how we can safely reopen our Clubs is yet to be published.

To this end, the earliest the Clubs can safely reopen will be Monday 14th September, this is obviously subject to change in response to guidance.

Whilst we will do everything we can to reopen, please be aware that timings/numbers of pupils **may/may not change from pre-lockdown days.**

**Face Masks**

Currently, guidance states that pupils should not wear face masks as this only increases the likelihood of contamination as they tend to take them off and are touched by other children. However, this situation is constantly changing, so we will update you on this at the start of the academic year.

**Visitors on site**

In order to reduce the number of visitors to the site, regrettably, at the time of writing this, guidance dictates that there will be no parents’ evenings, family engagement events or concerts during the Autumn Term. We will of course update you if the situation changes.

**Holidays**

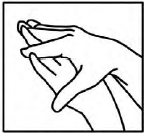
If you are travelling abroad this summer, you must inform us at school as soon as possible. It is possible, depending on the country visited, that you may have to self-isolate for fourteen days upon your return, which may impact on the date of your child’s return to school.

From September 1st, based on the current advice at the time, we will again communicate with you, informing you in more detail how the start of term will look.

In the meantime, my thanks and best wishes to you all.

Thank you for your continued support during these very challenging times and I wish you all a very enjoyable summer break.

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**The thumbs**

**The back of the hands**

The

6

Steps

of

Washing

Hand

**The tips of the fingers**

**The back of the fingers**

**In between the fingers**

**Palm to palm**