

7 January 2022

Dear Parent/Carer



I would like to wish you all a Happy New Year, hoping that you managed to enjoy a restful festive period with your families.

The purpose of this letter is to further update you on school arrangements for the start of the spring term which commences for all pupils on **Monday, 10 January 2022**.

As you know, the Welsh Government instructed that schools should take two planning days this week in order to respond to the updated guidance. This replaces our originally scheduled Training Days which will be postponed to later in the year. I shall notify you when these will occur when these new dates are decided.

During our planning days we will be finalising our plans in response to the potential for further periods of disruption, should this be necessary. Whilst I sincerely hope this will not be the case and our intention is to fully open for face-to-face learning from Monday, there is a possibility that staffing levels might be impacted at a point in time to such an extent that I would need to consider alternative arrangements such as directing home learning for certain groups of pupils.

Risk Assessment and Operational Changes

In light of the new guidance issued by Welsh Government and following the [announcement](#) this week by the Education Minister, our risk assessment is being modified in advance of pupils returning to school. Our new risk assessment will be published in due course on the school website, however, the important things to note are summarised below:

1. **Schools commence the spring term in January 2022 assuming "very high risk" levels**, as per the [school's infection control decision framework](#) and detailed in our risk assessment.
2. **Face-coverings:** The expectations around face-coverings remains unchanged, as they were prior to the Christmas break. To clarify, students and staff (excluding those with exemption) will be expected to wear face coverings inside the school buildings, where two metre distancing cannot be observed. This includes classrooms. Pupils will be expected to wear face-coverings on all school and public transport.
3. **Asymptomatic Testing (using Lateral Flow Tests):** All staff and students should undertake these tests three times per week before school on Monday, Wednesday and Friday (or evening before if preferred). To support this, all students will be issued with one box of tests on Monday in school and an email for additional orders will be sent in the next few days.
4. **Changes to self-isolation requirements:** The period a person will be required to self-isolate in the event of testing positive now changes from 10 to 7 days. TTP will continue to provide specific advice to confirmed cases and individuals identified as close contacts. However, unless otherwise stated, students (as well as vaccinated adults i.e. 18 and over) can still attend school where they have been identified as close contact, providing they take a lateral flow test (LFT) every day for 7 days and they continue to remain negative. This is known as 'Daily Contact Tracing'. Tests must be taken before an individual arrives in school each day. Test results should continue to be logged on the [Government website](#). In the event that the person develops symptoms a PCR test should be booked as soon as possible. This confirmatory step is

not now required in the event of a positive LFT result. This revised approach is intended to reduce the need for individuals to miss school.

5. **Scheduled events in the school calendar:** As a precaution all parents' evenings have remained remote this year which will continue to be the case. However, all non-critical meetings, which includes those with parents/families will now be held virtually until further notice.

Contingency Planning

As previously mentioned, our contingency planning has included a number of scenarios which may require reduced operations as a direct result of pressures upon staffing availability or in the event of a worsening public health situation. In particular:

1. **Onsite provision, where staffing levels are too low:** In the event of insufficient staffing to safely operate, we have been working on models which ensures face-to-face learning is prioritised for those students in key examination year groups who are due to sit public examinations, as well as children of 'key workers' and those identified as vulnerable.
2. **Remote learning:** Whilst most of our students, families and staff are familiar with our model for operating learning remotely, we have taken the opportunity to refresh our guidance and training materials on our [website](#).

Scheduled Examinations

A very few students are due to sit public examinations this month. These will continue to go ahead as planned.

Currently there is no change in government policy regarding the summer series of examinations and I know that students and staff continue to work hard in preparing for these important events.

Finally, I recognise that there is uncertainty as we begin the new term and much of the planning I mention is precautionary. However, I would like to assure you that our planning is robust in order to maintain a high-quality provision for students.

I look forward to seeing pupils back on Monday and working with you in the year ahead.

Yours sincerely



Mr. S. Budgen
Headteacher