

25th March, 2020

I wish all in our community the very best of health and urge you to be kind, compassionate and endeavour to fill your everyday with small acts of altruism. This involves observing the requirement to restrict social contact as a matter of urgency, but at the same time do your level best to help those in need and keeping yourself safe. Remember that crisis brings out the best and worst in us all at different times. Try to be your best when others are at their worst.

Mrs Thomas
Headteacher

School Building

Our original aim to keep the school site open for a minority of front-line workers, has changed. This is because of extenuating circumstances beyond our control which now render the school site, regrettably, to be unsafe to open for any pupils and staff. We are working in the background to overcome the issues that we were presented with on Monday and any changes to this situation will be communicated to you.

Learning from Home

Please see the school's website for details of online learning. The most sustainable ways to learn are listed under the 'general' section. We cannot express how important it is to read! The general section of the website explains the importance of 'Read, Research and Create (an individual project)'. This has links to explain the benefits of this approach. This is followed by a range of resources and we cannot emphasise enough the importance of playing games, indoor and outdoor exercise (within the parameters of 'lock down') It is important that children are not 'online' for extended hours and utilise other informal and practical ways of learning, and keeping physically and emotionally well. An example of indoor exercise is as follows:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/thebodycoach1>

<https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/coronavirus-joe-wicks-live-pe-lessons-watch-youtube-school-closures-a9413081.html>

Pupils will have been given work by teachers, together with advice and guidance in addition to the activities available on the website. Teachers will continue to be available as and when possible, however, they also will not be available at all times online and every day. It is also important to note that we understand that parents will have different circumstances and arrangements, and that pupils will therefore, be unable to complete the same learning tasks for significant periods of time.

We realise that it will be an impossible task for teachers, pupils and parents to be engaging in

online learning on a daily and regular basis. This is because parents will sometimes be using technology to work from home and it is not feasible, affordable or practical for an average family to have a computer each! Teachers, likewise will have their children trying to utilise and share equipment. Therefore, we realise and encourage a flexible and adaptable approach to learning, and this is not possible to take place online at all times, neither is this healthy for the body, mind, soul or the eyes!

We understand that pupils will be engaging in many different and differentiated activities as a result of their own personal circumstances. Likewise, our staff will be unable to set and insist on deadlines. This will simply be impractical as some parents/ pupils will not be able to access different technologies and may themselves have issues with broadband speed etc. It is also a fact that no school system was set up for this extraordinary situation and for all staff and pupils to be accessing online constantly and regularly. The more pupils and staff attempt to access the school system at the same time, the more likely the IT servers will be unable to cope with this remote demand.

Wellbeing Support

We remind you of our designated wellbeing email address for pupils to seek wellbeing support. Details are as per the website and any changes to this will be updated on the website. Leaders of Achievement will also be contacting pupils in their year groups from time to time to check up on them and keep in touch.

We are also aware that many parents will still be required to work and our staff are willing to offer a remote check up regularly throughout the day, if you wish for us to assist in providing outreach. When you are busy at work and just want a familiar person to check up on your child albeit from a distance, please let us know via the wellbeing email address at least 48 hours in advance.

Pupils Entitled to Free School Meals

All pupils entitled to free school meals were offered packs of food. These were collected from reception and approximately half were home delivered. Over the next couple of weeks we will be working with local suppliers to make available a voucher scheme for food. This will involve an amount up to £3.90 per day per child. The vouchers will be limited to buy food only and we will be liaising directly with parents in due course to provide you further details and explain how you can claim these.

Summer Examinations 2020

Staff are being contacted by a minority of parents regarding the estimated grades for pupils. Specifically some parents are trying to coerce staff to give grades at 'parental direction'. Please note that staff will not respond **to any individual parental requests for information regarding examinations**.

We will work with the relevant examination body once the procedures are established. The procedures and any information regarding the awarding of grades will be published on the

school website. There is already a link to the relevant body and this information accessible by staff. Qualifications Wales will be sharing regular articles on the actions they are taking along with partners to deal with the coronavirus pandemic.

<https://qualificationswales.org/english/coronavirus---covid-19/blogs/testing-times-for-us-all/>

Therefore, please refrain from contacting individual staff directly as you will not glean a response. Should you not be satisfied with the grades awarded via the formal process, which will be evidence-based, you will be able to utilise the appeals process, via the examination board in due course.

Thank you for your full cooperation and patience. Importantly, keep safe!