

We look forward to welcoming all pupils back to school for the start of the new school year next week. Years 7 and 12 will start on Monday 6 September, to be joined by all other year groups on Tuesday 7 September 2021. This will be Week 1 on the school timetable.

The school day starts at 8.30am for registration and it is important that pupils arrive at school in good time to ensure a prompt start to the day.

Uniform

Many pupils will have acquired new items of school uniform over the summer break. We asked in our parentmail communication dated 16 July 2021 that all items comply with our uniform requirements. Please note that leggings or jeans are not part of the school uniform and therefore must not be worn. All pupils will need to have a school jumper and tie which are compulsory and integral elements of the uniform. Footwear must be black with no other colours or logos visible. Jewellery is restricted to a watch and one stud earring in each ear – these must not extend beyond the earlobe to ensure the health and safety of all. We thank you for your cooperation in this matter as we start the new school year next week.

COVID-19

The Welsh Government has updated operational guidance for schools which will inform our approach to make the site as safe as possible for all pupils.

Our updated risk assessments can be found by following the links on the home page of the school's website.

Please note that the most effective way to prevent transmission of the virus in school is to stop infection being brought into the school. Anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 must self-isolate and not attend school. Anyone developing symptoms should also self-isolate immediately and book a test.

The Welsh Government is also encouraging pupils to start testing before they attend school by using lateral flow tests. Tests can be ordered online to be done at home or collected from a local community site or from a local pharmacist.

Twice weekly lateral Flow Device (LFD) testing kits will continue to be offered at the start of the term from school for all pupils who wish to take them home. All pupils will be given the opportunity to collect them to take home during their first registration session next week if they wish. More details from Welsh Government regarding testing can be found below:

COVID-19 Testing

With symptoms

'PCR' tests

When to take the test

- If you have COVID-19 symptoms
- To confirm your positive lateral flow test result

How long it takes

- These tests are processed in labs
- Most results are returned the next day, but can take up to 3 days

Get a test

- At a test site
- At home

Without symptoms

Rapid 'lateral flow' tests

When to take the test

Twice weekly when you do not have symptoms if you:

- Volunteer
- Are an unpaid carer
- Can't work from home
- Participate in a testing scheme in your workplace or education setting

You may also be asked to take a test for other reasons, such as before an event or travelling

How long it takes

- Result processed by test device
- Around 30 minutes

Get a test

- At home
- Collect from a test or community site
- Most pharmacies
- From work
- From school or college
- At your university
- From your nursery

Get tested to keep Wales safe
gov.wales/ttp

Whatever your rapid COVID-19 test result, let us know right away

Reporting your results is easy.
Go to gov.uk/report-covid19-result or call 119

Remember: you've only completed your test when you've told us the result.

Together we'll keep Wales safe

1. Lateral flow test - who and how to access the tests:

<https://gov.wales/get-rapid-lateral-flow-covid-19-tests-if-you-do-not-have-symptoms>

2. Lateral flow testing for people without symptoms

<https://gov.wales/lateral-flow-testing-people-without-symptoms>

3. Video of a young person taking a test at home.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=chR9Ud43EvM&list=PLTZvaU9CIF5u27UHyACS6AqdRTPIsJ7XO&index=34>

Many of the infection control measures implemented by the school last year will remain in force for the new term. These include:

- hand sanitiser being available in many areas of the school;
- pupils being encouraged to wash their hands regularly;
- pupils being encouraged to practice good respiratory hygiene, for example to cough into their elbow and/ or use a tissue to cover their mouths where possible;
- the continued use of one-way systems to control movement within buildings;
- maximising natural ventilation;
- pupils being advised to ensure they bring in their own school equipment and not share other pupils' stationery etc.

Face coverings

Welsh Government Guidance (updated 20/08/21) no longer recommends the routine use of face coverings in the classroom for pupils. The school will follow this guidance. However, pupils will be **encouraged to wear face coverings in communal areas**. Any pupil wishing to wear a face covering for personal reasons anywhere in school (including during lessons) will be permitted to do so. Face coverings should continue to be worn by pupils when travelling on dedicated school transport.

What happens if there is a case of COVID-19 in the school?

Updated Welsh Government guidance advises that "If a positive case is identified in a school, NHS Wales Test Trace Protect (TTP) will lead on identifying the close contacts of pupils who have tested positive, supported by discussions with schools. The TTP teams will be responsible for contacting each positive case and collecting information about their close contacts both within and outside the school. For learners this will focus on community contacts, close friendship groups and close interactions. It is TTP's role to identify which individuals meet the definition of a close contact and who, if anyone, would be required to self-isolate". Therefore, it is TTP who will make decisions regarding self-isolation and not the school.

We wish all families a pleasant weekend and look forward to seeing all our pupils and students next week.

Best wishes,
Cowbridge Comprehensive School Senior Leadership Team.