

Fy nghyf / My ref: EDG/JP

Llinell Uniongyrchol /
Direct Line: 01267
246522

Dyddiad /
Date:
5th February
2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Education Minister Kirsty Williams has today confirmed that Foundation Phase primary children can return to school for face-to-face learning after February half-term.

Coronavirus cases are continuing to fall across Wales which allows us to start planning for the return to school in a phased and flexible way, starting after February 22 with children aged 3 to 7.

We know that there is a lower risk of transmission amongst younger children and being at home has a negative impact on their physical and mental development and wellbeing.

We will now be working very closely with schools to plan for pupils' safe return to the classroom, taking into account the latest scientific evidence, as well as the latest guidance from Welsh Government, and how we manage this locally.

Please be assured that the safety of both pupils and staff is our main priority, and we will be reviewing the health and safety measures we have in place and any additional measures that may be needed.

Welsh Government has confirmed that funding will be made available to purchase higher grade face coverings for all school staff, and it is also introducing twice weekly testing of asymptomatic school staff using rapid lateral flow test devices. I am sure this provides further reassurance to you as parents, as well as our staff.

It will take some time before all pupils return to school for face-to-face learning and as a result, schools will continue to make on-site provision available for vulnerable children and children of critical workers after the half-term break.

Children who are clinically extremely vulnerable (shielding) should not attend school until at least March 31 and these pupils, as well as older pupils, will continue to learn from home at this time with support from their teachers.

Any further phasing of more year groups will be considered as part of Welsh Government's 21-day review on February 19 when there will be more detail around any further headroom.

Gareth Morgans, BAdd/BEd; MGw/MSc

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Director of Education & Children's Services,
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Mae croeso i chi gysylltu â mi yn y Gymraeg neu'r Saesneg

You are welcome to contact me in Welsh or English

Special schools and specialist settings will continue to remain open where possible.

It is extremely important that we all continue to follow the guidance around hand-washing, social distancing and face coverings. Please remind your children and please continue to wear face coverings when dropping off and collecting your children, and please do not gather at the school gates and keep your distance from others – we cannot reiterate how important this is to reduce transmission within our communities.

It is also important to remember that a return to school is not a return to normal life, and children should not be mixing outside of the classroom environment. Our schools have been successful in providing safe environments for our children and staff, but the classroom bubbles only apply within the school setting, and the 'stay at home' requirements must be adhered to.

Schools will be kept under constant review taking into consideration the latest number of cases, the R number and the number of patients in hospital. An increase in transmission rates could result in schools closing again.

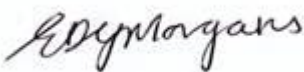
Please remember if you or your child or anyone else living in your household has any of the Covid-19 symptoms, you must immediately self-isolate and get tested. It is also important that you inform your school if your child tests positive.

For all the latest information on schools including a comprehensive list of FAQs please visit our website carmarthenshire.gov.wales/education

Your school will be in touch as soon as they have any further information on your child's return to school.

We would like to thank you once again for your all your co-operation and support during this time.

Yours sincerely



Gareth Morgans
Director of Education & Children's Services

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