

# Queen Elizabeth High School



Dear all,

Can I start by thanking you for your continued support through these uncertain and changeable times. I trust that you and your families are safe and well as we move towards the exciting prospect of having our learners return to school.

It is pleasing to see that infection rates are continuing to fall while vaccination levels rise across Wales and Carmarthenshire. We hope both these trends continue on their current trajectories in order to give us the best opportunity to return to face to face on-site learning and some normality in our everyday lives as we move forwards.

## Welsh Government Review

Welsh Government undertook a further review on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March in light of falling infection rates and rising levels of vaccination. The findings of that review were presented in a statement from the first Minister for Education, Mrs Kirsty Williams.

In summary:

- It was proposed that learners in years 11 and 13, and those doing similar qualifications in colleges, will be able to return to face-to-face learning in a safe and flexible way from 15<sup>th</sup> March.
- Where possible, Welsh Government also wanted to provide some flexibility for other learners to return to school, such as Year 12 and those in Year 10 who may also have been entered for qualifications this summer. Though this won't necessarily be a return to full-time on-site learning.
- Similarly, in this morning's announcement that as infection rates continue to fall, the Minister is keen for schools to make some flexible provisions for the return of years 7, 8 and 9 ahead of the Easter break.
- However, the Minister, was keen to stress that **this would not be a full return to school for years 7, 8 and 9 before Easter**. Though it would provide schools with the opportunity to offer learners check-ins with teachers, with a focus on support for wellbeing, and readiness for a full return to school after Easter.

The new guidance was issued which can be accessed at:

<https://gov.wales/operational-guidance-schools-and-settings-support-limited-attendance>

In this context we are pleased to share with you our 'Plan for Return of Learners Up Until Easter', a timetable for which is provided below. We feel it is important to give all our learners an opportunity to touch base with teachers and friends and therefore every year group will have an opportunity to attend for at least one day on-site before the Easter holidays.

This is an outline of our arrangements and further details will follow.

## Week commencing 15<sup>th</sup> March (School Week 1)

|                  |         |         |            |
|------------------|---------|---------|------------|
| <u>Monday</u>    |         | Year 11 | Year 12/13 |
| <u>Tuesday</u>   |         | Year 11 | Year 12/13 |
| <u>Wednesday</u> | Year 10 |         | Year 12/13 |

|                 |  |         |            |
|-----------------|--|---------|------------|
| <u>Thursday</u> |  | Year 11 | Year 12/13 |
| <u>Friday</u>   |  | Year 11 | Year 12/13 |

### Week commencing 22<sup>nd</sup> March (School Week 2 )

|                  |        |        |        |         |         |            |
|------------------|--------|--------|--------|---------|---------|------------|
| <u>Monday</u>    |        | Year 8 |        |         | Year 11 | Year 12/13 |
| <u>Tuesday</u>   | Year 7 |        |        |         | Year 11 | Year 12/13 |
| <u>Wednesday</u> |        |        | Year 9 | Year 10 |         | Year 12/13 |
| <u>Thursday</u>  |        |        |        |         | Year 11 | Year 12/13 |
| <u>Friday</u>    |        |        |        |         | Year 11 | Year 12/13 |

Year 12 and 13 will be treated as one bubble, in line with our arrangements in the Autumn Term.

Key points to the arrangements planned:

- We have prioritised exam groups. These groups will have access to face to face learning and provide opportunities to complete assessments at a time when staff will be preparing to award CDGs.
- It will provide pupils in practical subjects access to the facilities and resources they need to complete their courses.
- Year 10 English Literature external exam candidates will have access to their English teachers for support.
- All pupils will be provided with an opportunity to remind them of the routines and procedures in place in the school that keep them safe from Covid. This is especially important as there might not be any lead in time available when pupils return to school after Easter.
- We are planning on making the Year 7, 8 and 9 days wellbeing focussed days with activities focussed on supporting mental health, physical wellbeing and providing opportunities to mix with friends in fun, stimulating and educational activities.
- With teaching face to face resuming in Years 11, 12 and 13 there will be no online provision for these students and pupils (with the exception of Year 11 on Wednesdays) . This also applies to those Year groups on site; on those days that pupils are on site there will be no work set on line.

The school transport will operate as normal. Further information will be made in the coming week as regards the return to school, including meals provision.

### Summer A Level, As Level and GCSE Assessments Updates

As you will be aware, formal external assessments for year 11 have been cancelled by Welsh Government with Centre Determined Grades (CDGs) now being awarded by the school in a similar fashion as to how they were awarded last year. No further significant information on this process was shared with us last week. **It was however, announced last Friday that A/AS Level Results Day will take place on 10<sup>th</sup> August and GCSE results day will be moved to August 12<sup>th</sup>.**

Additional information from Qualifications Wales was sent out to all learners in Years 10, 11, 12 and 13 yesterday. The key points are:

- School will issue the **provisional** Centre Determined Grades that have been decided in each subject in June.

- The school needs to send these grades to WJEC by 2 July. At this stage, grades are not confirmed as WJEC will need to make final checks for all schools and colleges, to ensure clear processes have been followed.
- Grades will be final when issued on results days.

A full copy of the letter to learners can be found by following this link:

<https://www.qualificationswales.org/media/7199/letter-to-learners-040321.pdf>

### **Our Current Online Curriculum**

Engagement levels with pupils and students has increased in this current lockdown, We have all become more 'IT savvy' and have upskilled. These points were made to governors this week, who were very appreciative of all that staff have been doing to support online learning. We continue to appreciate any feedback from parents and carers.

We will, on the lead up to Easter maintain our wellbeing calls; ensuing that we provide the wellbeing support pupils and students need alongside their on line learning.

In this context can I remind parents and carers that 1 in every 5 lessons is a 'reflect + review' session. Teachers will be available to pupils but no additional work will be set. This session provides pupils the opportunity to:

- Catch up on missed work
- Seek help in areas they are struggling
- Consolidate their understanding

We will also continue to promote the positive efforts of pupils by issuing certificates, publishing pupil names on year group websites and celebrating our successes. Please visit our website, year group pages and social media for information and to share the successes of our pupils.

### **St David's Day**

Monday March 1<sup>st</sup> was our E-steddfod. A massive thank you to everybody for all the work and creativity that went into this. Thank you to all our departments for promoting our Eisteddfod and making it such a successful online event. The quality of the entries was amazing. A big thank you all the judges who



gave up their time to decide on the first three places and to all staff who posted motivational videos on the classes. Additionally, special thanks go to Mr Lewis for all the IT support, Mr H Davies and Mrs Jones for creating the videos, our admin team for the checking of pupil consent and to every member of staff who was involved in filtering the entries ready for the judging process. Diolch yn fawr pawb!

Here is the link to the PE department video to see how far pupils could travel in reality and virtually by doing 60 minutes of exercise as part of the 'Let's Get Wales Moving' initiative.

[1080p.mov - Google Drive](#)

Below is a link to a video of the music competitions from the School Eisteddfod.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1NGWWlvf5ZVOBlr8XCzMaRaIOUIQEH-3w/view?usp=sharing>

Finally, if you haven't seen it please take the time to view the competition results online video by clicking on the link below:

### **Dates This Half Term**

11<sup>th</sup> March - Skills Data Drop

15<sup>th</sup> March – Return of Learners to School (see timetable above)

18th March – Year 7 Parents'/Carers' On-line Evening

### **Test Trace Protect**

If your child has any of the symptoms of Covid then please book a test via the contact number below.

If your child receives a positive test result for Covid 19 then please email the school **even during the current lock down arrangements.**

Parents in Carmarthenshire are asked to inform both the school and Delta Wellbeing should your child receive a positive result for COVID-19. If your child receives a positive test result for Covid 19 then please email the school using the email address [Office@qehs.carms.sch.uk](mailto:Office@qehs.carms.sch.uk) and inform Delta be email on: [TTP@deltawellbeing.org.uk](mailto:TTP@deltawellbeing.org.uk) or by telephone on 0300 333 2222

*If your child is identified as a contact of someone who has tested positive for Covid-19, they will need to self-isolate at home for 10 days. This means they can't leave the house; they can't go the shops or exercise anywhere outside your home/garden, and they can't have any visitors to your home/garden. Everyone else in the household can continue as normal in line with the fire-break regulations - however if your child becomes symptomatic, the whole household would then need to self-isolate.*

The TTP protocol has been changed in relation to pupils and staff who may routinely receive a Covid-19 test whilst receiving medical care or treatment for an unrelated condition.

In future, anyone who receives such a test must remain at home and not attend school until the result of the test has been received. If the result is negative, they may return to school immediately. If the result is positive however, they must continue to isolate for a period of 10 days from the date of test (able to return on day 11)

Find out more, visit the Carmarthenshire County Council website:

<https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-services/education-schools/re-opening-schools/?type=45926>

If in doubt about what advice to follow then please contact the school.

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|---|---|
| <b>QEH School</b>   | <b>01267 245300</b><br><b>Office@qehs.carms.sch.uk</b>  |
| <b>Delta Wellbeing (if your child has COVID symptoms)</b> | <b>0300 333 2222</b>  |
| <b>To book a test call or Use the booking portal</b>      | <b>Call 119</b><br><b>Booking Portal: <a href="https://gov.wales/apply-coronavirus-test">https://gov.wales/apply-coronavirus-test</a></b> |

Whilst I'm sure we're all delighted at the prospect of the school starting to come back physically onto site slowly and bit by bit, we will be mindful of doing so safely and in a manner that benefits and protects all.

Thank you, as always for your continued support.

Kind regards,

Dave Williams

Headteacher

Queen Elizabeth High School