

Queen Elizabeth High School

Update for Parents / Carers and Learners

5th January 2022



Dear Parent/Carer,

Blwyddyn Newydd Dda i chi gyd! Happy New Year everyone!

We are looking forward to welcoming back learners on a phased return as outlined in our update before Christmas. **Can I remind KS4 and KS5 learners that this is week one.**

- **Wednesday, January 5th – Planning & preparation Day (Hub operating for critical workers)**
- **Thursday, January 6th – Years 10,11, 12 & 13 on site – Years 7,8 and 9 online learning (Hub operating for critical workers)**
- **Friday, January 7th - Years 10,11, 12 & 13 on site – Years 7,8 and 9 online learning (Hub operating for critical workers)**
- **Monday, January 10th – All pupils on site**

We have spent the last two days planning for the safe return of pupils to school and making preparations for any possible future move to online learning should the need arrive. Laptops have been made available to families who require them, so that pupils who might have to self-isolate or access online learning can do so.



It is our intention to remain open to all pupils where at all possible. However, parents/carers should be aware that if staffing levels fall below a level where we cannot operate at full capacity we would have to resort to learning on line from home for some year groups. This might happen at short notice. Our priority will be maintaining provision for exam groups in school while moving to online learning provision for years 8 and 9 on some form of rotation. As stated, this would be a last resort and we will keep parents/carers informed.

Key Dates this Term

There have been some changes to arrangements and our calendar as a result of disruption at the end of last term and new guidance. Below is a list of key events coming up in the Spring Term.

****Our 6th Form Open Evening originally planned for January 19th and 20th, will now be held as a virtual online event on 3rd February. Information will follow.****

11 th January	Year 9 Options Evening (virtual event)
12 th January – 28 th January	Year 12 and Year 13 mock examinations
14 th January	UCAS deadline
27 th January	Year 9 Virtual Parents'/Carers' evening
3 rd February	Sixth form Open Evening (virtual event) – TBC
7 th February – 18 th February	Key Stage 4 (Year 10 and Year 11) Assessment week
17 th February	Year 7 Parents'/Carers' evening
18 th February	INSET day (no school for pupils)
10 th March	Year 10 Virtual Parents'/Carers' evening (rescheduled)
21 st March – 1 st April	Key Stage 5 (Year 12 and 13) Assessment week
24 th March	Year 8 Virtual Parents'/Carers' evening

Please find below information regarding updates to current operational guidance for January 2022:

Updated Guidelines.

Nationally we are currently operating at Welsh Government **Alert Level 2**:

Keep Wales safe:

- *get both jabs and when invited, get your booster*
- *limit your contacts*
- *outdoors is safer than indoors*
- *do a lateral flow test before seeing others*
- *if you have symptoms, self-isolate and book a PCR test*
- *wear a face covering*

As part of Local Covid Infection Control Framework for Schools, all Carmarthenshire schools are now at "**Very High Alert**":

	Low	Moderate	High	Very high
Reducing close interactions	Implement arrangements aimed at reducing close interactions between staff and learners where possible.	Implement arrangements aimed at reducing close interactions between staff and learners. This may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> not holding large group gatherings such as assemblies the use of one way systems consistent seating plans (recognising this may not be possible for younger learners) using outdoor spaces where possible. 	Implement arrangements aimed at reducing close interactions between staff and learners. This may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> not holding large group gatherings such as assemblies the use of one way systems consistent seating plans (recognising this may not be possible for younger learners) using outdoor spaces where possible floor signage. 	Reduce close interactions between learners to the lowest practical level. This may include the measures set out at the High level as well as introduction of contact groups and potentially pausing after school/breakfast provision, or team sports where necessary. Welsh Government may determine that for limited periods of time flexibility is given to enable schools to consider the introduction of staggered school session times as part of their overall package of measures. Schools will be notified of this flexibility and the period of time that it is in place.

	Low	Moderate	High	Very high
Physical distancing	Encourage physical distancing in indoor communal areas outside of the classroom, such as corridors, recognising that this may not be possible with younger children or with learners that require one to one support.	Physical distancing in place in classrooms depending on room capacity and risk assessment, recognising that this may not be possible with younger children or with learners that require one to one support.	Physical distancing and seating plans in place in classrooms. This may include forward facing desks depending on room capacity and risk assessment, recognising that this may not be possible with younger children or with learners that require one to one support.	Physical distancing and seating plans in place in classrooms. This may include forward facing desks depending on room capacity and risk assessment, recognising that this may not be possible with younger children or with learners that require one to one support.
LFD testing for staff and secondary aged learners	Little or no regular LFD testing. Testing available for contacts of confirmed positive cases.	Targeted/focused testing used where there are local risks identified by IMT. Testing available for contacts of confirmed positive cases.	LFD testing three times a week available for staff and secondary aged learners to help identify and isolate asymptomatic cases as soon as possible.	LFD testing three times a week available and strongly encouraged for staff and secondary aged learners to help identify and isolate asymptomatic cases as soon as possible.

LFD Testing

Pupils should test three times per week (Sunday night, Tuesday night and Thursday night).

A positive test result please should be reported to the school at **Office @qehs.carms.sch.uk**.

Following this parents/carers should make arrangements to book a PCR test.

If you have symptoms of COVID-19, you should self-isolate and take a PCR test as soon as possible. If the result is positive, you must self-isolate from the day your symptoms started and for at least 7 full days. You can leave self-isolation after 7 full days (on day 8 of your self-isolation period) providing that you have two negative LFT on day 6 of your self-isolation period and another one 24 hours later on day 7 and return to school.

If either of the LFTs taken on day 6 or day 7 is positive, you should remain in self-isolation until 2 negative LFTs or day 10 whichever is sooner. After day 10 you may return to school (even if your LFT is showing a positive result).

If you still have a high temperature after 7 full days, even if the LFT is negative, you should continue to self-isolate until your temperature has returned to normal. You may find you still have a cough or loss of taste or smell, this is normal and you can return to school.

If you display any symptoms and have recently tested positive for COVID-19 (within the last 90 days) you should firstly take a LFT instead of a PCR.

Close Contacts

If you are a fully vaccinated adult or aged between 5 and 17 you do not need to self-isolate if identified as a close contact but you are strongly advised to:

- take a LFT every day for 7 days (this replaces the day 2 and day 8 PCR)upload all tests results on GOV.UK even if negative or void.
- If you are 18 and over, and not fully vaccinated, you must self-isolate from the day you were last in contact with the person who tested positive for COVID-19 and for the next 10 days. You must also take a PCR test on day 2 and day 8.

Canolfan Elfed

For our most vulnerable learners in Canolfan Elfed there are now additional measures in place. Where there is a recorded positive case in a class parents/carers will receive a letter to inform them of this situation.

If there are two or more cases within 7 days then the parents/carers of the pupils in that class will receive a "warn and inform" letter advising them of these circumstances. At this stage we would encourage parents/carers to conduct daily LFD tests for 7 days.

Ventilation and CO2 monitors.

All classrooms and other areas of the school used by staff and pupils are to be well ventilated at all times. CO2 monitors have now been placed in classrooms to monitor air flow.

Face Coverings

Our guidance regarding the use of face coverings has changed temporarily as a precautionary step while we learn more about the Omicron variant of concern. The following measures are in place:

- Face coverings should be worn by, staff and visitors in all indoor areas of all educational settings, including classrooms, where physical distance cannot be maintained.
- **Face coverings should be worn by secondary aged learners in all indoor areas, including classrooms, where physical distance cannot be maintained.**
- **Face coverings continue to be recommended to be worn by secondary aged learners on school transport.**
- There will be some learners and staff who are exempt from wearing face coverings- we do not expect this position to change as the wellbeing of individuals is critical to any considerations around whether staff or learners should wear face coverings.

Despite the current challenges we are looking forward to the Spring Term. Thank you again for your continued support of our school and community.

Kind regards,

Dave Williams
Headteacher