

Queen Elizabeth High School



Good afternoon all,

Once again events have moved swiftly in response to the Covid pandemic. Transmission rates have risen across Wales and in response to this, late yesterday evening we received updated advice from Kirsty Williams, Education Minister for Wales, as regards arrangements for next week. The press release is included in its own section below.

School will close to pupils and staff at the end of today. From Monday 14th December until Friday 18th December we will be moving to teaching on-line.

There is no doubt that this has been a challenging term, and we appreciate that pupil wellbeing will be best promoted by families being provided with quality time together over the Christmas holiday period. Moreover, we firmly believe that a robust provision of home learning for the last week of term is the best way to ensure continuity of learning for all our pupils during this period; we do not wish for any pupil to miss out. In this context, we will be retaining a provision within Canolfan Elfed in the coming week.

For mainstream pupils, a full programme of learning will be available on Google Classroom from Monday 14 December. There will be clear deadlines for the work, which will be staggered so that pupils may work through the tasks at a time and pace that best suits them. Alongside this there will also be opportunities for blended learning especially in KS5.

Teaching Assistants will be supporting learners online and our wellbeing support team will be available to support families as well as making wellbeing phone calls in support of those who already access our wellbeing support services.

It is vitally important that pupils remain at home during the day next week, working on the tasks set by their teachers. This will enable pupils to keep up with their work, so that they can make smooth progression to in-class learning when school re-opens in January. This will also serve to prevent unnecessary virus transmission in our community next week; we are making this move to remote learning to help safeguard the rights of families to come together for Christmas. It will be important for us all to support our community by ensuring that we continue to follow Covid guidelines and help reduce the risk of transmission.

As we approach another phase of teaching online, we want to ensure that our pupils and students have the support they will need while learning from home. From Monday 14th December, if you require any support regarding ICT then please contact our ICT helpdesk:

ithelp@qehs.carms.sch.uk

Additionally, school can be contacted via our email address: Office@qehs.carms.sch.uk. We remain committed to supporting our pupils and families as fully as possible next week, so please do contact us if we can help with any matter.

Parents of free school meals pupils will be contacted regarding the arrangements for payments over Christmas and as regards the arrangements for the coming week. If you need contact at any time the best link is:

FreeSchoolMeals@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

<https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-services/education-schools/school-meals/free-school-meals/>

I would once again ask parents and families to be vigilant, to be 'Covid safe' and follow the guidance set down by Welsh Government on the build up to Christmas. If we follow the guidance then we can all plan to have an enjoyable Christmas holiday and to spend a happy Christmas as families together.

Please see the attached document for new up to date advice from Carmarthenshire County Council:
COVID-19. Play your part – Stop the spread.

Please support the school and community by providing information to pupils and students that will help prevent transmission. Welsh Government are asking us to:

- Stay out of each other's homes, except in very limited circumstances.
- Limit the times you leave your home, and the distance you travel.
- When you do leave home, please try and be restrained in how many different people you see. It is better to see the same one or two people regularly than to see lots of different people occasionally. Maintain social distancing, including outdoors.
- Meet people outdoors rather than indoors where possible, even in circumstances where the law allows you to meet indoors.
- Work from home if you can.
- Wash your hands regularly and follow other advice on hygiene.
- Self-isolate if you show symptoms of coronavirus.

You can find a useful FAQs for all on the guidance at:

<https://gov.wales/coronavirus-regulations-guidance>

Welsh Government Announcement

Secondary schools and colleges in Wales will move to online learning from Monday as part of 'national effort to reduce coronavirus transmission'

<https://gov.wales/secondary-schools-and-colleges-wales-will-move-online-learning-monday-part-national-effort-reduce>

Secondary schools and colleges in Wales will move to online learning from Monday as part of 'national effort to reduce coronavirus transmission'

Secondary schools and colleges in Wales will move to online learning from Monday, December 14 as part of a 'national effort to reduce transmission of coronavirus' Education Minister Kirsty Williams confirmed today.

The Minister made it clear that, thanks to the efforts of education staff across the country, schools and colleges are safe and secure environments, with almost half of all Welsh schools having had zero covid cases since September.

However, it is also recognised that education settings being open can contribute to wider social mixing outside the school and college environment.

By making this decision, the Minister felt it was important to make a 'clear, national direction' to take pressure off individual schools, colleges, local authorities, parents and carers.

The Minister said her decision followed expert advice from Wales's Chief Medical Officer showing that the public health situation in Wales was deteriorating.

The latest TTP data shows that rates of Covid-19 have further increased across Wales and have now exceeded 370/100k with a test positivity of 17%.

The R rate in Wales has increased to 1.27 with a doubling time of just 11.7 days.

As during the firebreak, local authorities and schools will be expected to consider what provision is suitable for vulnerable learners and this could include 'on- premises' learning.

Education Minister Kirsty Williams said: "Every day, we are seeing more and more people admitted to hospital with coronavirus symptoms.

"The virus is putting our health service under significant and sustained pressure and it is important we all make a contribution to reduce its transmission.

"In his advice to me today, the CMO recommends that a move to online learning should be implemented for secondary school pupils as soon as is practicable.

"I can therefore confirm that a move to online learning should be implemented for secondary school pupils and college students from Monday next week.

"We recognise, as we did during the firebreak, that it is more difficult for primary and special school age children to undertake self-directed learning.

"That is why we are encouraging primary and special schools to continue to stay open.

"Having spoken to local education leaders, I am confident that schools and colleges have online learning provision in place.

"This will also be important in ensuring that students are at home during this time, learning and staying safe.

"Critically, and this is very important, children should be at home.

"This is not an early Christmas holiday, please do everything you can to minimise your contact with others."

"The education family in Wales has pulled together so many times this year to make a real difference to the course of this virus and ultimately to save lives and I know we can do the same again.

"Together we will keep Wales safe."

Autumn Term Interim Reports (Years 7-11) & Parental Response forms will be Emailed out to Parents in the coming week. Pupils will also receive a copy of their Autumn Interim Report in their Hwb Emails. Further details will be provided in next week's parental update.

Head Boy and Head Girl Canolfan Elfed

This week was a busy time in Canolfan Elfed. Alongside Christmas decorations and decorating doors the team have been working with our aspiring leaders in producing personal videos that outlined their suitability to be on the Sixth Form leadership team in Elfed. Each candidate prepared a video stating their skills and suitability for the role. The videos were presented to the team and pupils in Elfed and then Mrs Thomas, Miss Jones and myself had the difficult decision of choosing the team.

Congratulations go to:

Head Girl – Asleigh Harrison

Head Boy – Guto John

Deputy Head Boy – Oliver Smith

Deputy Head Girl – Jasmine Davies

A special mention must go to our prefect team:

Lewis Collins, Shaun Allen, Glane Poole, Ella James and Miah Phillips

Canolfan Elfed Grand Draw

A massive thank you goes to all our parents for supporting our raffle in Canolfa Elfed. We have raised the magnificent sum of..... (DRUM ROLL).....£2780.00!!!!!!

Christmas Arrangements

Friday 11th December is National Christmas Jumper Day.

Today was National Christmas Jumper Day, and our planned activities have provided us with a timely opportunity to have some festive cheer and give a proper goodbye to pupils before they move towards online learning. The atmosphere in school has been fantastic today and can I give a very big thank you to Mrs Lisa Jones, our Wellbeing Officer, and the S01 team for their organisation and ideas. Thank you Miss Vowles, Ms Davies, Miss Scourfield and Mr Robinson.

Can I also say a big thank you to all our staff who involved themselves in decorating doors. I will provide further information and photographs on our website in the coming week. I can promise you that you are in for a real treat!

Transition

The deadline for application to Queen Elizabeth High School is **18th December 2020**. All applications need to be made online before this date. Information can be found by following this link:

<https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-services/education-schools/school-admissions-changing-schools/moving-up-to-secondary-school/>

If a parent/potential parent has any difficulty in accessing the link or completing forms online then please contact the school on 01267 245300.

Our transition video for Year 6 is available on our website. It really is a fantastic video that gives pupils in primary a sense of what a special community we have here.

<https://www.facebook.com/564163413678033/videos/388149675716369/>

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 is awaiting a test result for Covid then please do not send them to school until you have received that test result.

In the event of a positive case of COVID-19, immediate action is taken, and we work closely with the Test, Trace and Protect team to identify individuals that might need to self-isolate and prevent any transmission within the school.

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 14 days. This means they can't leave the house; they can't go to school or 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.

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.

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

Can I extend a huge thank you for your support as parents and carers during this challenging term. Please continue to keep yourselves and family members safe on the build up to Christmas. Have a lovely weekend.

Kind regards,

Dave Williams

Acting Headteacher