

Queen Elizabeth High School

Update for Parents – 3rd December
2020



Good afternoon all,

Can I commence by once again thanking you for your support of the school and our community in the last weeks and months. I would ask for that support to continue as we progress towards Christmas and the end of term. I believe that it is important for the school to maintain the momentum we have achieved recently in teaching and learning while pupils are with us, as this helps fill the gaps lost during self-isolation and lockdown. With the exception of some days that we will set aside for Christmas celebrations, teaching will continue up until the end of term, **Friday 18th December 2020**. In this context please see the accompanying letter from the Director of Education Mr Gareth Morgans.

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>

Christmas Arrangements

Friday 11th December is National Christmas Jumper Day. We will be making arrangements in school for some Covid safe Christmas celebrations and events. This will include:

- Christmas jumpers day in school
- A festive inspired range of Christmas foods in the canteen
- Decorating classroom doorways (a competition for the best form entry!)
- Christmas Quiz
- Festive films

More details will be shared with pupils and parents this week.

We received our Christmas trees this week from Dexter's Tree and Plant Hire Services. Can we extend a very big thank you to them for supporting our school community. Can I extend a big thank you to Jac Lewis, Iwan Williams and Hannah Lloyd for the Christmas tree topper and the sixth form team for decorations. It has certainly brought the Christmas cheer to QEH. Nadolig Llawen!



Continuity of Learning and Assessment Weeks

As part of our strategy to support pupils in exam years we have introduced a series of assessment weeks that allow us to help track progress of pupils and students. These will form an important part of the evidence we will use to support pupils and students in achieving outcomes next summer, alongside the provisions that Welsh Government and the exam boards put in place. We are of course mindful of any disruptions that occur during these set assessment weeks and will apply common sense and extensions where necessary.

In relation to disruption to KS5 lessons this week we will be postponing assessment week 2, unless assessment have already been conducted (In which case the assessment outcomes will be included on staff tracking sheets as evidence). Assessment week 3 will continue in January as mock exams; there will be more detail to follow as regards these arrangements.

It is especially important for pupils in KS4 pupils and KS5 students to attend school as often as possible. Where there are periods of self-isolation or lockdown, we will immediately move to distance learning models through Google Classroom, blended learning or live streaming of lessons. We would like to reassure you that we will continue to do our very best to make sure our community of learners is not disadvantaged.

Use of face coverings in school: Update to Welsh Government guidance

A reminder from last week that the guidance on the use of face covering have changed. ***Pupils and students should now have face coverings in place as they enter on to school premises even in open air spaces.*** The Welsh Government has updated its operational guidance on the use of face coverings in schools and colleges.

The guidance now states that face coverings should be worn:

- in all areas outside the classroom by staff and learners in secondary schools and colleges
- on dedicated school and college transport for learners in year 7 and up
- by visitors to all schools and colleges, including parents and carers picking up and collecting children

The move follows the publication of SAGE evidence and [a recent TAG report](#).

The expectation is that these changes will be implemented as quickly as possible over the coming weeks.

Along with hand-washing and social distancing, the use of face coverings will play its part in keeping pupils, staff and parents as safe as possible.

Further Information

- Links on social media to explain social distancing and how to wear face coverings <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLTZvaU9CIF5u27UHyACS6AqdRTPIsJ7XO>
- Regularly updated information from Welsh Government is available on their social media channels https://twitter.com/WG_Education <https://www.facebook.com/educationwales/>
- Full Welsh Government COVID–19 guidance for schools and settings can be found here: <https://gov.wales/operational-guidance-schools-and-settings-autumn-term-version-4-html>

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/>

Free School Meals – Update from Carmarthenshire County Council

Welsh Government have confirmed that payments are to be made to pupils in receipt of Free School Meals during the following periods of time –

- School holidays
- If you child is instructed by Welsh Government to stay at home for periods other than school holidays
- If your child is instructed to self-isolate for 14 days because of a positive case of COVID at their school

Payments are not being made for any other reason. We are making this clear to families who contact us directly, and we would be very grateful if you and your staff could ensure that the same message is given by yourselves. This avoids confusion and stress for families who are already finding things incredibly difficult.

In terms of the processing of payments, they are being processed in batches to comply with audit requirements and this sometimes leads to families receiving payments at different times and delays in their receipt. We are respectfully asking families to be patient and assuring them that we are working as quickly as possible to complete all payments due. Again we ask you as schools to convey the same message.

Thank you.

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

Thank you all once again for your support of our school and our community. We will continue to support our pupils and students both academically and personally in the weeks and months ahead.

Kind regards,

Dave Williams

Acting Headteacher