

Queen Elizabeth High

Update for Parents -



Dear Parent/ Carer,

As you are aware events have again moved quite rapidly this week. As a result, I think it is important to provide you with a clear update on the recent announcement made regarding the 'fire break' lockdown and provide some additional information, from ourselves, Welsh Government and the Local Authority.

A 'fire-break' will be introduced across Wales from 6pm on Friday, October 23rd until the start of Monday, November 9th in a bid to regain control of coronavirus. This fortnight-long action is needed to save lives and prevent the NHS from being overwhelmed.

It will mean that people must stay at home, except for very limited purposes, such as for exercise; and must not visit other households or meet other people they do not live with either indoors or outdoors. No gatherings will be allowed outdoors, such as Halloween or fireworks/Bonfire night or other organised activities.

It was confirmed that secondary schools will re-open after the half-term for pupils in Years 7 and 8, whilst other pupils will continue their learning from home for that week.

Those sitting GCSEs and university entrance exams in November will be able to do so in school.

What Does this mean for QEH?

Firstly, clarification as regards the arrangements around Half Term. Tomorrow will be an INSET day where staff will be focussing on developing blended learning and live streaming techniques and training. Year 7 and 8 pupils will be returning to school on Monday 2nd November. Pupils and students in Canolfan Elfed will also be returning that Monday on a phased return (parents have been informed regarding which days).

Year 9 to 13 will receive online learning for the week commencing 2nd November, before returning to school themselves on Monday 9th November.

Transport will be operating as normal for years 7 and 8 from Monday 2nd November and then joined by year 9,10 and 11 from Monday the 9th November 2020. If there are any issues or concerns over transport please contact via the email (learnertravel@cararthenshire.gov.uk) or follow the link for Carmarthenshire website below:

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

The school catering services will run as normal for years 7 & 8 from 2nd November and then for years 9 to 13 from Monday the 9th November.

Parents of free school meals pupils will be contacted regarding the arrangements for payments over half term and as regards the fire break week for years 9-13. If you need contact at any time the best link is:

FreeSchoolMeals@cararthenshire.gov.uk

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

All our cleaning regimes and routines will also remain in place over this period. We would like to take this opportunity to reassure you that our school is COVID-secure, and we have strict procedures and health and safety measures in place.

Arrangements around setting work during lockdown

The arrangement as regards work set for pupils is outlined in the table below:

Year groups	Expectations
7 and 8	Pupils will return to school and follow their normal timetable in face to face lessons.
9 and 10	Teachers will set one task/lesson in each subject over the week. The work will be on Google Classroom.
11,12 and 13	Pupils will follow their normal timetable at home. Lessons will take place in line with their timetable. These lessons will include a mixture of live streaming and google classroom.

Learning Online Year 9-13

There will be a combination of lessons available. Teachers will provide a combination of live streamed and blended learning lessons. Pupils will have access to resources and tasks via google classroom. Further details as regards timetabling arrangement will be made available at the end of this week.

Guides are available on our school website to support parents and learners in how to access google classrooms and additional resources to support learning from home.

ICT Provision

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 2nd November, if you require any support regarding ICT then please contact our ICT helpdesk:

ithelp@qehs.carms.sch.uk

FAQs The Firebreak and what it means for schools

Welsh Government have provided a series of responses for parents to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). The questions regarding the firebreak, what it means for schools and responses can be found in the link below:

<https://gov.wales/schools-coronavirus-firebreak-guidance>



21-10-20

Dear Parent/Carer,

I would like to take this opportunity to write to you all to thank you for everything you have done to support your child's learning since March and, more recently, since our schools re-opened in September.

I would also like to provide an update in respect of a range of issues that are currently affecting schools, you as parents/carers and our learners. I am sorry that this is a long letter, but I thought it would be helpful to provide you with a comprehensive update at this time. This note covers the following issues:

- Use of face coverings by learners using home-to-school transport
- Use of face coverings by learners in secondary schools
- School attendance if your child is showing symptoms
- Self-isolation
- School 'bubble' arrangements
- Social distancing
- Pupil behaviour
- Parking outside/on school premises

Use of face coverings by learners using home-to-school transport

I would be grateful if you could ensure that learners aged 11 and over, using local authority provided school transport, wear suitable face coverings. This requirement does not apply to some learners with additional learning needs or relevant medical conditions which constitute an exemption.

We have provided each secondary aged learner with a suitable face covering and we are asking parents to ensure they have it on (or their own face covering) when they get on school transport, and that they have washed or sanitised their hands.

A pupil who is not exempt from wearing a face covering, but who refuses to wear one, or removes the covering while on board school transport, may be refused onward travel and have their entitlement to free transport removed. Therefore, please make every effort to ensure your child adheres to this requirement.

Use of face coverings by learners in secondary schools

Secondary school learners are asked to wear a suitable face covering in communal areas in school including corridors, halls and toilets. This requirement does not apply to learners with additional learning needs, relevant medical conditions which constitute an exemption, or to learners with disabilities. This requirement does not apply to primary school-age learners. Individual schools are responsible for identifying these communal areas and parents/carers are

therefore advised to ensure that their child is following the requirements in place in each school.

School attendance if your child is showing symptoms

If your child is unwell at home with any of the symptoms of COVID-19 listed below, please do not send them to school. The main symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- a high temperature- chest or back feels hot to the touch.
- a new, continuous cough- this means coughing a lot, for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours; and/or
- a loss or change to sense of smell or taste- this means they cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.

If your child has any of the main symptoms of coronavirus:

- get a test to check if they have coronavirus as soon as possible; and
- stay at home and do not have visitors until you get the test result.

Please inform your child's school **immediately** or if out-of-hours please call Llesiant Delta Wellbeing on **0300 333 2222** or by emailing TTP@deltawellbeing.org.uk who will notify the school on your behalf.

Please be sure to follow the Welsh Government's **Self-isolation stay at home guidance**.

If, however, your child does not have symptoms of COVID-19 but has other cold-like symptoms, such as a runny nose, they do not need to be tested and they and you do not need to self-isolate.

Your child should attend school if fit and healthy to do so.

Self-isolation

If your child is asked to self-isolate by their school, this is following an assessment approved by the Test Trace Protect Team (TTP) and Public Health Wales and therefore needs to be strictly adhered to. **Self-isolation means that the person required to self-isolate does not leave home and no visitors attend the premises.** I must remind you that sanctions can be imposed on any individual found not to be adhering to self-isolation rules by enforcement agencies.

If your child is identified as a contact of a positive case of COVID-19 (either another pupil or staff member), you will be contacted immediately by the school to arrange for the collection of your child. It is therefore recommended that you make the necessary arrangements in advance in case of this eventuality. Even if your child is eligible for free home-to-school transport, guidance from Welsh Government is that this should not be used in such a situation. Only in exceptional circumstances will the local authority be able to transport learners home from school if they are required to self-isolate.

School 'bubble' arrangements and self-isolation directives

Schools are working hard to reduce the chances of COVID-19 spreading. In order to restrict the number of contacts, learners are being kept with their own year groups and/or classes to form a 'bubble', which will be kept apart from other 'bubbles'.

Maintaining distinct groups or bubbles that do not mix makes it quicker and easier in the event of a positive case, to identify those who are close contacts and may need to self-isolate and keeping that number as small as possible.

When a school has a positive case of COVID-19, all those who are in the bubble are immediately asked to self-isolate and work from home as a precautionary and preventative measure whilst the Test, Trace, Protect (<https://newsroom.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/2020/10/kcs-covid19/test-trace-protect/#.X46rnZAzXIU>) process gets underway to identify those individuals that are direct contacts.

Those who have had close contact with the case are required to self-isolate in line with national guidance, for 14 days after their last known contact with the positive case. This could involve the whole bubble. This is to prevent further transmission of the virus; ensuring that if learners (or staff) are carrying the virus (even without symptoms), they do not come into contact with others and potentially spread the virus further.

If it is established your child has not come into contact with the individual concerned, then you will be notified by the school with a date they can return to class (as long as they are fit and well with no symptoms).

Social distancing

All schools have undertaken risk assessments and follow Welsh Government and Public Health Wales guidance relating to the management of COVID-19. While every effort is being made in and around each school, I would request your support in ensuring that we keep school communities safe. In this respect I would ask that you continue to follow all national and local guidance not only in and around the school, in particular when dropping off /collecting your children, but at all times. This is important as we are aware that COVID-19 is circulating within the community and we must all play our part in making the school community as safe as possible.

Pupil behaviour

Please can I remind parents/carers that good pupil behaviour remains a priority. Schools will act appropriately should behaviour issues present and will use the necessary sanctions should this be necessary.

Parking outside/on school premises

Pick-up and drop-off times can be very busy around the school due to the numbers of children on site. Therefore, I would ask that parents/carers consider the safety of the children when driving and parking in the proximity of our schools. I would be grateful if you could ensure that you drive and park safely in appropriate areas, even if this means a longer walk to the school gates. If you cannot comply with social distancing requirements outside school, you are advised to wear face coverings when dropping off and picking up your child- parents in the Llanelli Health Protection Zone have done this effectively over the last few weeks.

I would like to reassure you that the local authority is working closely with our Headteachers and staff in all our schools in order for them to remain open in accordance with Welsh Government guidance. Our staff are working hard to ensure that the whole school community remains safe. Risk assessments are regularly reviewed and are amended in light of the latest guidance received in order to minimise any risks.

I appreciate that this is an anxious time for families and your co-operation is much appreciated. I hope you have a wonderful half term break.

Thank you, once again, for your ongoing support,

Gareth Morgans

Director of Education and Children's Services

Gareth Morgans, BAdd/BEEd; MGw/MSc

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Neuadd y Sir, Gaerfyrddin, Sir Gaerfyrddin SA31 1JP

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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

Communication

Email Addresses

It is more important than ever before to ensure the school has up to date contact details and active email addresses for all our parents. If you have not been receiving texts or emails from the school, please contact us on the numbers below to update your details.

Important Numbers and Contact Details

Please see below for some important telephone numbers and contact details:

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

I would like to extend a very big thank you to all our parents for the support demonstrated this half term. I wish you all a very pleasant half term, and hope that you all keep safe and well.

Kind regards,

Dave Williams
Acting Headteacher