

August 28th 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Return to School – September 2020

I hope you and your families have enjoyed the summer break, and that your children are looking forward to the start of a new school year at Bryntirion. We are very much looking forward to welcoming back everyone in September; it has been such a long time, and it will be exciting to see each other once again.

I wrote to you in July to provide you with some details about arrangements for the start of term and, in particular, the first two weeks. My intention now is provide you with further, more detailed, information on these plans.

Please note that our current arrangements are in draft form. The guidance we receive from Welsh Government is often amended and updated, and we are constantly revising plans and risk assessments in response to changes in official guidance. ***Our arrangements will be subject to a full review by Monday 21st September. This will provide us with sufficient time to undertake an informed assessment of these new operations.***

A – Introduction

All members of staff will be attending school from September 1st 2020 for training, planning and preparing for the return of all pupils. We have 2 planning and preparation days on Tuesday 1st September and Wednesday 2nd September, followed by an INSET day on Thursday 3rd September. Our risk assessments have been revised, with new operational guidance in mind, and staff will be aware of the processes and systems to ensure that we welcome everyone back safely.

If you wish to read the full operational guidance from the Welsh Government for your information, please follow this link:

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-07/operational-guidance-for-schools-and-settings-from-the-autumn-term.pdf>

We have based our plans upon this guidance. BCBC has also produced a useful set of FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) for the full reopening of schools, and I have attached these for your information as well.

B - Week 1 (common across schools in Bridgend)

***Tuesday 1st September** –staff planning and preparation day.

***Wednesday 2nd September** – staff planning and preparation day.

*These are not designated INSET days.

We have planned for 6 INSET days in 2020.21. We have moved the INSET Day originally scheduled for Friday 16th July 2021 to Thursday 3rd September. This means there will be two, rather than three, 'planning and preparation' days next week.

INSET 1 – Thursday 3rd September

INSET 2 – Friday 27th November

INSET 3 – Monday 4th January

INSET 4 – Monday 12th April



INSET 5 – Monday 19th July
 INSET 6 – Tuesday 20th July

Friday 4th September

1. Welcome and induction for new **Year 7 pupils. 9.00 (Sports Hall)**
2. Welcome, welcome back and induction for **Years 12 and 13 students**

- **9.30 – Year 13 (Senior Hall)**
- **12.30 – Year 12 (Senior Hall)**

C - Week 2 – (w/c September 7th 2020

As we move into the week beginning Monday 7th September, we will add an additional year group per day. One of the reasons for this is to give us greater control. Many of our students have not been able to return to school in June/July, so the one-way systems, zoning, distancing and hygiene controls will be new to them. When the students return in September we want to have the opportunity to discuss these with each year group, and make sure they have a full induction regarding our expectations. All students will fully return, and the school will be at full capacity by Thursday 10th September.

Monday September 7 th	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Welcome back to Year 11. Starting time 8.50am – Sports Hall 2. Day 2 for :Years 7 - 9.00 am – registration class Years 12 and 13 - 9.30am – registration class
Tuesday September 8 th	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Welcome back to Year 10. Starting time 8.50am – Sports Hall 2. Continuation for Years 7, 11 Starting time 9.00 am - registration class 3. Years 12 and 13 - Starting time 9.30am - registration class
Wednesday September 9 th	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Welcome back to Year 9. Starting time 8.50am – Sports Hall 2. Continuation for Years 7, 10, 11 Starting time 9.00 am - registration class 3. Years 12 and 13 - Starting time 9.30am - registration class
Thursday September 10 th	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Welcome back to Year 8. Starting time 8.50am – Sports Hall 5. Continuation for Years 7, 9, 10 & 11 Starting time 9.00 am - registration class 6. Years 12 and 13 - Starting time 9.30am - registration class
Friday September 11 th	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All year groups in school with a start time as follows: 2. Years 11-13 - 8.45am, 3. Years 9 -10 - 8.40 a.m. 4. Years 7- 8 - 8.35 a.m.

D - Travel to school

The majority of pupils walk to school or are transported to school by parents or family members. A small number of pupils travel to and from school in transport provided by the Local Authority. For these pupils, transport arrangements will follow existing pick up timetables, and pupils arriving early to school will be accommodated and supervised in school's Senior Hall, if necessary, until the start of their registration period. Students arriving by bicycle will need to dismount and walk their bicycle in. All of these measures are in place for the health and safety of all members of our community.



The use of face coverings is now recommended by the local authority for all secondary age pupils travelling on dedicated school transport ie bus, taxi or mini-bus. This will not be mandated or enforced by Transport Operators. Therefore, learners cannot be forced to wear face coverings or be refused onwards travel if they do not wear a face covering on any dedicated school transport.

Face coverings for secondary age pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) or with medical conditions/disabilities are not recommended by the local authority.

Bryntirion will provide a suitable face covering, on request, for children travelling on dedicated school transport.

Parents are requested not to accompany their children onto the school site or gather at the school gate. Taxis and minibuses will be able use the 'taxi rank' and parking bays as usual, and the controls already in place at school will be in place. The school gates will be closed after 9.00, and vehicular access and movement on the school site is restricted to school staff only, and permitted delivery drivers, contractors and BCBC officers.

E - The school day



	Year 11-13	Year 9-10	Year 7+8
Registration / Well-Being	8:45 – 9:00	8:40 – 9:00	8:35 – 9:00
Lesson 1	9:00 – 10:00	9:00 – 10:00	9:00 – 10:00
Lesson 2	10:00 – 11:00	10:00 – 10:20 & 10:40 – 11:20	10:00 – 10:40 & 11:00 – 11:20
Break	11:00 – 11:20	10:20 – 10:40	10:40 – 11:00
Lesson 3	11:20 – 12:20	11:20 – 12:20	11:20 – 12:20
Lunch	13:20 – 13:50	12:20 – 12:50	12:50 – 13:20
Lesson 4	12:20 – 13:20	12:50 – 13:50	12:20 – 12:50 & 13:20 – 13:50
Lesson 5	13:50 – 15:00	13:50 – 14:55	13:50 – 14:50

Welsh Government operational guidance states: ‘Where possible, schools should consider staggered starts or adjusting start and finish times to keep groups apart as they arrive and leave school. Staggered start and finish times should not reduce the amount of overall teaching time.’

The timing of the school day has been organised slightly differently in September. This is so that we can try to ensure that, wherever possible, pupils are able to stay within their year groups throughout



the day. Year groups will have slightly different start and finish times so that we can organise a controlled start and end to the school day.

The main difference will be at break and lunchtime. Break will have 3 phases for different year groups from 10.00 – 11.00. Lunchtime will also have 3 phases for different year groups from 12.20 – 1.50. We understand that lunchtime will be slightly shorter, but we have needed to spread the lunch break over a much longer period of time in order to ensure pupils remain in their year group contact groups during unstructured time during the day.



Please see the diagram below:

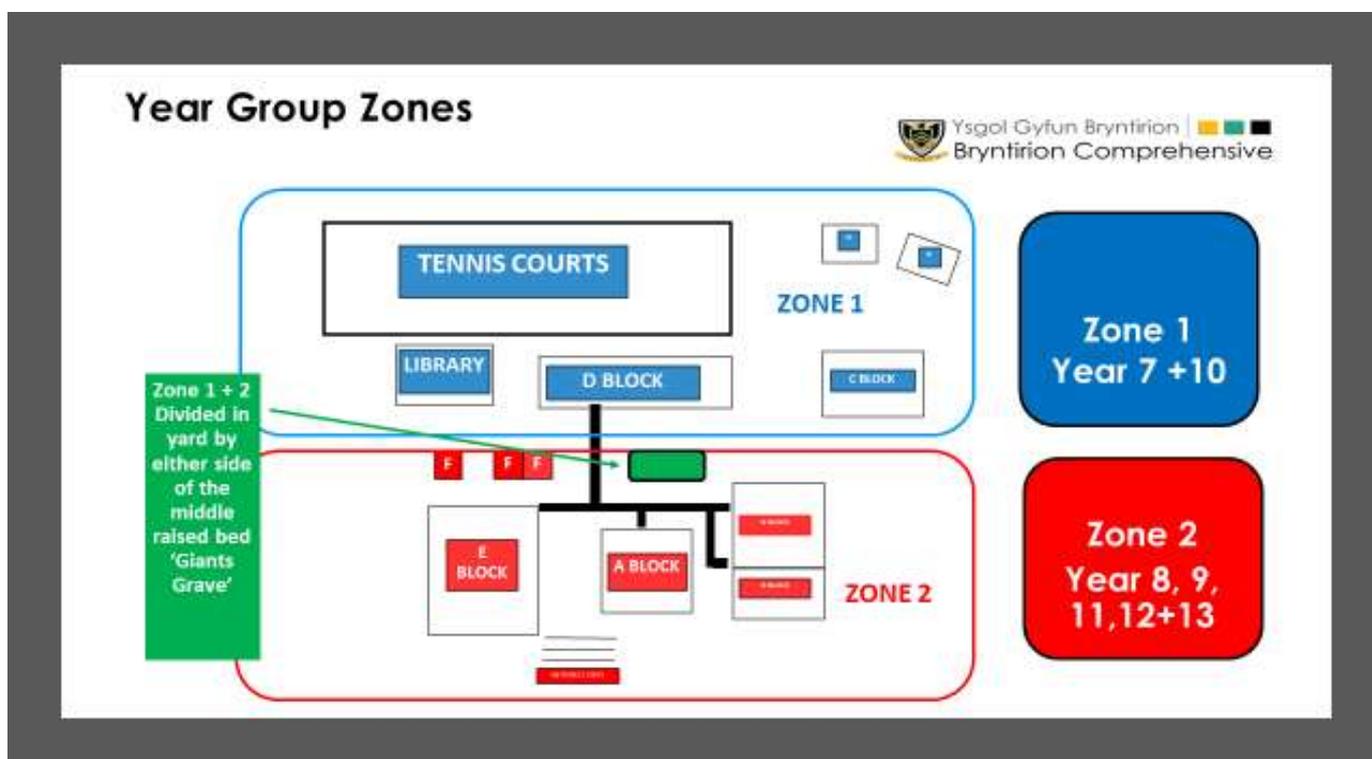
Break Time / Lunchtime Year Group Zones

Zone 1 – Junior Hall / Canopy / D Block corridor overspill / Yard 1

Zone 2 – Senior Hall/ E Block Corridor / Yard 2

You will need to stay in YOUR YEAR GROUP ZONE AT BREAK AND LUNCH TIMES

Year Group	Zone
Year 7	Zone 1
Year 8	Zone 2
Year 9	Zone 2
Year 10	Zone 1
Year 11	Zone 2
Year 12+13	Zone 2



In order to accommodate these break time arrangements some groups will have split lessons during lessons 2 and/or 4. Please note that all pupils will still have 5 hours of lesson time.

The school day finishes as usual at 3.00 p.m. but we will be organising a staggered departure from 2.50 p.m.



These are the arrangements for the start and end of the school day:

Enter / Exiting School site
 Pupils will report to their registration rooms at the beginning of the day and exit the school site from lesson 5 classrooms, via the route below.

Registration Block/ Lesson 5 block	Entrance / Exit route
A	Main entrance
B	Main entrance
C	Main entrance
D	Side entrance along sports hall
E	Main entrance
F	Side entrance along sports hall
H	Side entrance along sports hall
Library	Side entrance along sports hall

Year groups will use separate entrance and exit routes and we will operate different finish times but without reducing lesson time. By filtering learners in, we try to ensure that the majority sanitise on entry. It will be very challenging to manage late arrivals, as staff supporting safe entry to school will be required to undertake cleaning procedures and other duties once lessons start formally at 9.00.

We have in place one-way systems ahead of the start of the new term but please do not worry about committing these to memory, as signage has been organised to make this visible. We will be taking the students through everything when they return. They will have guidance on movement around the school and expected behaviours provided for them in induction sessions at the start of term.

Movement around the school



One way systems will be in operation in each block. Follow the signs and make sure when you are going up or down stairs you

KEEP ON THE LEFT



The catwalk is out of bounds to all pupils except sixth formers (and in an emergency).

F - What control measures will be in place to mitigate risk in school?

In consultation with the Health and Safety team at the local authority, we have prepared a comprehensive risk assessment for our school and its context. We have reviewed all Fire Evacuation and Health and Safety policies in light of returning to full capacity. This is in draft form but will be available on the school's website prior to the return of pupils to school.



The measures we have undertaken following the guidance from Welsh government include:

- a requirement that people who are unwell with symptoms of COVID-19 stay at home
- robust hand and respiratory hygiene including ventilation
- continuation of increased cleaning arrangements
- active engagement with Test, Trace, Protect
- formal consideration of how to reduce contacts and maximise distancing between those in school wherever possible and minimise potential for contamination so far as is reasonably practicable.
- limiting contact between students wherever possible, focusing on distancing, classroom layout, zoned breaks and lunchtimes (including fair weather and wet weather provision), and controlled systems for one-way movement
- promoting good respiratory hygiene will be via the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach. We will ensure that we have enough tissues and bins available in the school to support learners and staff to follow this routine

G - What will classrooms look like?

Welsh Government Guidance states:

“It is strong public health advice that staff in secondary schools maintain distance from their learners, staying at the front of the class, and away from their colleagues where possible. Ideally, adults should maintain a 2-metre distance from each other, and from learners.... Schools should make small adaptations to the classroom to support distancing where possible. That should include seating learners side by side and facing forwards, rather than face to face or side on, and might include moving unnecessary furniture out of classrooms to make more space.”

At Bryntirion, this means that:

- all students will need to sanitise, or wash hands prior to entry to classrooms and exit from classrooms;
- whilst in classrooms the teacher is responsible for maintaining a 2 metre distance from students;
- where possible, desks will be forward facing;
- where possible, furniture (except desks and chairs) will be removed from classrooms.

H - What equipment will I need and can I share it?

Many of the activities that we carry out in school involve the use of specialist equipment. This includes subjects such as Science, IT, DT and Music, to name a few. The current guidance provides us with clear instructions on the cleaning of equipment when used within contact groups. For example, a football can be used in PE with a group of up to 30 students. It would be thoroughly cleaned before use with a different group.

For individual and very frequently used equipment, such as pencils and pens, it is recommended that students have their own items that are not shared. Classroom based resources, such as books and games, can be used and shared within the contact group. In line with Welsh Government guidance, students and staff can take books and other shared resources home, although unnecessary sharing should be avoided.

Pupils should limit the amount of equipment they bring into school each day, to essentials such as lunch boxes, bags, hats, coats, books, stationery, mobile phones (kept in bags) The basic equipment needed each day is as follows:



- i) Pens and pencil case
Geometry set
- ii) Notebook
- iii) Calculator
- iv) Planner
- v) Bag

Exercise books and pupils' work can be taken home by teachers to mark and assess.

I- What about attendance, wellbeing, safeguarding and behaviour?

All students should return to school in the autumn term unless they have a medical reason not to do so. We will keep a daily record of attendance and request that parents notify us daily if their child is unable to attend, explaining the reason for this. We will be working proactively to engage with families to identify any barriers to students returning to school and will offer further support needed. If you are in doubt about a health condition, parents and carers should take advice from their GP or hospital doctor.

Please contact us if you have any concerns about your child's return to school. We are mindful of the fact that some pupils may have experienced trauma in recent weeks and the operation of the school is very different to that which they left in March.

Up to date safeguarding training will be provided for all school staff on Wednesday 2nd September. The procedures for safeguarding remain the same. Designated Safeguarding Officers are Mrs Karen Owen and Mrs Claire Hawkes. Further guidance on safeguarding and child protection is available via the following links:

<https://gov.wales/keeping-learners-safe>

<https://www.safeguarding.wales/chi/>

It is imperative that pupils follow all of our school rules to enable us to keep themselves and others safe. If a pupil's behaviour purposefully or continuously endangers the safety of themselves or others, then action will be taken to isolate them, or they will be removed from the school site by parents.

K - Should I wear a face covering or PPE?

We are waiting to receive updated operational guidance on the wearing of face coverings from the Welsh Government and Local Authority and will provide further information about this before the start of term. Face coverings are recommended where social distancing cannot be maintained. However, they are not a replacement for far more effective measures such as social distancing and hand hygiene. At present, the wearing of face remains a matter for personal preference. Where possible, we will organise our school environment to operate social distancing.

L - How will we respond to any infection?

Our risk assessments include a protocol for any cluster/outbreak of two or more cases of COVID-19 in the school community. Our planning and groupings will minimise the impact of a local lockdown.

We must emphasise that no student or member of staff should attend school if they:



- feel unwell, have any of the four identified COVID-19 symptoms (a new continuous cough, a high temperature or loss of taste or smell) or they have tested positive to COVID-19 in the past 7 days
- live in a household with someone who has symptoms of COVID-19 or has tested positive to COVID-19 in the past 14 days
- We have a clear escalation policy and procedures in place if learners or staff begin to show symptoms of COVID-19 while at the school. Those showing symptoms will be kept separate until they can be collected and taken home.

M - Identifying clusters and outbreaks

A potential cluster is defined as two or more cases of COVID-19 among learners or staff in our school within 14 days, or an increased rate of absence due to suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19. If an outbreak is declared, we have protocols in place to work with the Outbreak Control Team to implement the recommended adjustments to how our school operates. The priority will be infection prevention, control measures and social distancing.

N - What if there is a second spike?

Although the intention is for all students to return to school in the autumn, we have already commenced our contingency planning in the event of a further local lockdown. Given the uncertainty over future transmission levels, for the near future, it is essential that we prepare for a range of possible circumstances. We will work with the relevant Public Health authorities in this eventuality and ensure you are fully informed.

O - What about catering facilities in school?

We are working with our partners in BCBC catering to offer a reduced catering service at break and lunch time throughout this period. Hot food will be available, but this will mainly be through a 'Grab and Go' or 'Takeaway' option. I will write to you with further details about catering and dining options next week. Children will be permitted to bring a packed lunch to school.

Cashless payment systems will be in operation as usual from September. However, parents/carers will need to ensure there is sufficient balance on their child's account. If you have not received a recent email with your child's account balance, please contact the school to ask for this information. It is unlikely that cash machines in school will be accessible, initially, and parents/carers are advised of the need to credit school meal accounts via the ['Pay it'](#) function on the Bridgend County Borough Council website. This is the usual method for adding credits to accounts for school meals.

Please note that students will not be allowed offsite during the school day, including break and lunchtime.

Free school meals will be available on the days your child attends school through a 'Grab and Go' service. The local authority is also considering the ongoing provision of a weekly food parcel for eFSM pupils until 11 September. A decision on this will be communicated in due course.

P - Will visitors be allowed onto the school site?

Please note that parents will only be able to come onto the school site for a pre-arranged appointment. Social distancing and hand sanitising will be in place in our reception area and all meetings will take place in the school's conference room for ease of cleaning. I apologise that we are required to remove the seating from our reception area at this time but can assure you that you will be met promptly for any appointment.

We will not permit any other visitors onto the school site without a pre-booked appointment.



Q - School Uniform for the autumn term:

Pupils will wear school uniform upon restarting September. At this stage pupils are advised to wear their summer uniform with polo shirt (or white shirt). Uniforms will not be required to be cleaned any more often than usual, nor do they need to be cleaned using methods which are different from normal. We are planning to return to full school uniform as soon as conditions allow, and will provide advance notice of this.

R - What are the priorities for learning from September 2020?

When considering their approach to autumn term learning, the Welsh Government has advised schools to consider six priorities as follows:

i) Health and well-being

Learning should support learners' mental, emotional, physical and social well-being as well as recognising the importance of outdoor learning and play.

ii) Purpose

All learning should have a clear purpose in mind, focused around what is important for learners now and in the longer-term.

iii) Literacy, numeracy and digital competence

Learners should have opportunities to develop and apply these skills across the curriculum.

iv) Broad and balanced

Learners should have learning experiences which span a broad curriculum and which include opportunities to develop a breadth of understanding and a range of knowledge and skills.

v) Progression and assessment

Learners should make meaningful progress throughout this period. Learning should be designed to support increasing depth and sophistication of learning over time. The use of assessments to help learners move to the next steps in their learning is encouraged.

vi) Partnership with parents, carers and learners

Schools should develop a common understanding and language with parents, carers and learners. This can help underpin learning and support learning experiences.

And finally for now.....

I am very grateful for your support in ensuring your child is fully prepared for a return to school in September. Please use the information above to speak with them and settle any queries that they may have and impress upon them the need for cooperation and good behaviour. We want them all to be **Ready, Respectful and Safe!**

The above information may change from time to time as the situation is so fluid. This may be in relation to the spread or eradication of the virus, or new scientific advice that is shared with us. We have to try to be as patient, flexible and positive as possible and hope for a settled and purposeful school, year. You can be assured that at Bryntirion we will be doing our very best to make the return to school as positive, safe and as smooth as possible.

The safety of our staff and your children is so important to us, and I am look forward to working with you once again in September.



Kind regards and best wishes,

Yours sincerely

RK Pawar (Headteacher)

