

## September Update – Friday 25<sup>th</sup> September

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope you are and your families are well.

This week I held an 'online' assembly for the whole school for the first time with all pupils following in their form rooms. We were very pleased to welcome Year 7 pupils back to school following their period of isolation. Unfortunately, we have since required a group of children in Year 10 to undertake a period of isolation also. Whilst nobody at this uncertain and anxious moment in time knows what the days, weeks and months ahead have in store, we will continue to face whatever comes our way with hope and optimism.

I wrote to you at the start of term to provide information about the operational arrangements we have in place. Over the past few weeks, we have reviewed these operations on a daily basis, made amendments where necessary and asked pupils to provide us with feedback. I congratulated the pupils for taking the time to respond to a pupil survey issued last week. They took it seriously, and showed a high level of maturity, making some sensible observations and suggestions.

Whilst we do not intend to make too many changes at present, we are constantly reminding everyone to follow the rules and routines we have in place. In the survey, most pupils stated that they thought the new systems worked well, but that these routines take some getting used to and that they sometimes forget to follow the rules. We will persevere and issue reminders throughout the day.

We are aware of every child's classroom seating arrangements and contacts within classes and use the 'Classcharts' Management of Information system to organise our classrooms. In addition, we have asked pupils to write down names of regular contacts in their planners, and the names of any others with whom they have face-to-face conversations during the day. We have asked all the children, wherever possible, to stay with pupils they know and can name during break and lunch times.

### **A – Notification and Communication**

I am, of course, mindful that the situation locally and nationally has changed considerably since the start of term. We have shared a great deal of information with you already about operational guidance and all letters for parents and key documents are located on the school's website under the heading: 'Letters for Parents'. Please be mindful of the protocols for notifying the school in the case of a positive COVID-19 case. It is very important that parents notify the school (or Test, Track and Protect (TTP)) as soon as a positive case has been confirmed.

Whilst we remain hopeful, we are planning for a range of other scenarios, including further interruptions to learning. Schools have needed to make the decision, in consultation with officers in the local authority, to send groups of learners home at the start of, or during, the school day. I would be therefore be very grateful if parents would discuss with their children essential arrangements (where to go, how to be picked up) should they need to go home during the day.



## **B - Continuity of Learning**

We have been adapting our '*Continuity of Learning Plan*' to support pupils in their learning in these uncertain times. This means having plans in place for a range of scenarios and stages. During the lockdown period, we developed our use of ClassCharts and Microsoft TEAMS platforms in order to support learning at home. As we move forward, we will use these platforms as part of our plan to enable continuity of learning should there be further disruption.

Information on how to access Microsoft TEAMS has been covered in school and there are user guides on the school website. Every pupil in the school has a Microsoft TEAMS account and is a member of various TEAMS within the school platform, including year and class TEAMS. This is the main method of communication used by teachers and pupils; it is not accessible to parents. However, your child can show them to you and we will share with you more information via ClassCharts, SIMS or e-mail when the need arises.

In simple terms, we have plans in place for **four** stages as follows:

### **Stage 1 – All pupils (in school or otherwise)**

We are developing long term curriculum plans which outline the skills and content covered in every subject in each year group over a **half-term period**. This plan details the learning expectations and means of assessment used to measure progress. Please note that this plan is flexible and may change for various reasons, e.g. absence, pace of learning etc. We intend to share the plans with you next week.

### **Stage 2 - Individual pupils ill/self-isolating at home (not full class)**

The aim in this stage is to ensure that anyone at home due to illness or self-isolation can access work missed in school. Every pupil is a member of a class 'TEAM', linked to the subjects on their timetable. On a regular basis, classroom teachers will be uploading resources to the class team so that all children in that class can access activities and resources.

Pupils who are not able to attend school will have access to these resources, which they can then use at home to continue their learning. This will replace the need for parents to request work for absent pupils.

Please ask your child to show you their class TEAMS, and activities and resources available to them. Please note that pupils can use the class TEAMS to send work, receive feedback and pose questions to their teachers and classmates.

### **Stage 3 – Whole teaching groups/year groups self-isolating at home (full class)**

In the event that a whole class or year group 'bubble' is required to self-isolate, pupils will be expected to follow their normal timetable from 8:45am to 3.00pm.

At the start of every lesson, the class teacher will upload work onto the subject TEAM classroom. This may be via a recorded or written instruction, along with any resources needed. The class teacher will be available for the whole hour to answer any queries and monitor the work being completed. It is important that your child follows the times of the lessons so they can link with their teacher and the rest of the class.

We will write to you with further details about this process if the need arises.



## **Stage 4 - Whole School Closure – all pupils at home**

If the school is required to close for a period of time, we will publish bi-weekly home learning plans. These will be similar to those operated during the lockdown period. In addition, we will be incorporating elements of Stage 3 into this plan – please see above. As usual, all plans and arrangements for online learning are available in the parents' section of the school website.

We are very mindful of the differing home circumstances of our pupils and want to support those who cannot easily access materials online, or have limited access to either wifi or computer equipment. **Please let us know if you are unable to access the work or need any form of support from us.**

### **C – School Uniform**

At this stage, pupils are able 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 will conduct another review of uniform before half term. Please prepare for a return to full school uniform after half term, and ensure your children have appropriate outdoor clothing suitable for the onset of colder weather.

### **D – Your support**

Your ongoing support has never been more appreciated or needed. It is very challenging working within the operational guidance and with the measures we have in place, and the staff at Bryntirion are doing a tremendous job in welcoming the children back, looking after their wellbeing and supporting them in their learning. The vast majority of pupils state that they are glad to be in school and are enjoying learning again. It is our mission to do all we can to help them in these extraordinary times.

Please support us by ensuring that your children are ready for learning every day, with the correct uniform, equipment and attitude for learning. In addition, please familiarise yourselves with the online platforms we have established, the methods used for home learning and the communications we send you nearly every day. Please continue to ask for information or for clarity if you have any queries.

We are very grateful for your patience. We will continue to do the very best we can to support your children.

Yours sincerely



RK Pawar - Headteacher

