



07/01/2022

Dear parents and carers

I hope you had a good, Covid clear Christmas and wish you all a very happy and healthy new year. Yet again, we start a new term with refreshed Covid guidance and operating procedures for schools.

We have external exams starting next week for Years 10, 11 and the 6th form and these will continue as timetabled.

In summary, our expectations for the return of learners to school on Monday the 10th of January, 2022 are as follows:

- School transport will remain the same each day and I remind learners that it is still strongly recommended that they wear their face covering on dedicated school transport. School will start at the same time, there will not be a staggered start in operation. ALL learners should be in their tutor group, ready for the register to be taken by 8.30 at the latest.
- As we only have one means of exit at the end of the school day, that is, our main gate our Key Stage 3 learners will be dismissed from school from 2.35pm. Those walking will be expected to go straight home at this point. Buses will leave at the normal time, but will be available for learners to board from 2.35pm
- Upon entry to school in the morning, learners should enter via their dedicated Key Stage entry point, sanitise their hands and ensure that they have a mask. Sanitising stations and mask collection points are available at these entry points. Sanitising points are also available in all classrooms and along key corridors in the school. At break and lunch, learners MUST only go to their dedicated year group area of the school to avoid social mixing.
- Learners who are symptomatic with the main Covid symptoms should NOT attend school and go for a PCR test where they will remain off school to self-isolate, unless the PCR returns a negative result.
- It is strongly recommended that learners take a Lateral Flow Device Covid Test three times per week – on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings, BEFORE they come to school. If any of these tests return as positive and the learner is NOT experiencing any symptoms, they must self-isolate and take further tests on days 6 and 7. If these results are negative, they can return to school on day 8. Learners who are symptomatic, should follow the process as in the bullet point directly above. School will be distributing some tests when more arrive early next week, but in the interim LFD tests are available free of charge in places such as pharmacies.



- Fully vaccinated adults over 18 and learners between the ages of 11 and 17 do not need to self-isolate if identified as a close contact, even as a household member. However, it is strongly advised that instead, they take an LFD Test every day before attending school for 7 days or until 10 days since their last contact with the person who tested positive for Covid-19, if this is earlier.
- As ventilation is key to our management of Covid, we will encourage learners to be outside during break and lunch when possible. Classroom windows will also remain open and as a consequence, learners should ensure they wear a school jumper and in extreme circumstances where they are cold, they can wear their coats inside as long as this does not compromise Health and safety e.g.: during a practical science or catering lesson.
- All learners should wear masks whenever inside the building. This includes in all classroom settings. Masks are available at the school. Learners who are medically exempt should ensure they inform their Learning Manager or Mentor to ensure that staff are informed.
- In terms of arrangements for the 6th form, all YEAR 13 learners are expected to be in school for registration every morning and remain in school all day, other than Wednesday when a separate arrangement will be communicated to them by Mr Punshon. For the time being and as a temporary measure until the end of January when we will review the situation, Year 12 should only attend school for their lessons only and are free to remain home, working on their school studies for the remaining time. Where transport is an issue, they can remain in school all day should they wish.

What will happen if there is an issue with staffing at the school?

As you know from the news and the media, it is expected that there may be some staffing capacity issues in some schools over the coming weeks. Currently, our staffing levels at Ysgol Bryn Elian mean that we should be fine to open as normal on Monday. However, if staffing capacity does become an issue we will follow the following processes, where possible:

- Assess staffing levels each evening and if it becomes clear that the school has too many staff off to cover classes and to operate safely, households will be notified by text message that evening, if the school will be closed to a particular year group the following day. This message will also be put on our social media sites. We encourage parents to follow our Facebook page for this reason.
- We will endeavour NOT to close the school to groups of learners during the course of the school day, where possible. However, if we are faced with the situation that staff are poorly and have to leave during the day and we cannot cover classes we may have to send learners home as the very last resort and when every other avenue for cover has been exhausted.



- As Years 10-13 are currently still to sit exams in both the January and June exam series, we will try not to close the school to these year groups.
- If we need to close the school to year groups – we will start with Year 9. The rationale for this, is that they may be old enough to remain at home, undertaking on-line schooling without supervision, to impinge less on the need for parents to take time off work. The decision on supervision will remain one for parents, however. If more than 1-year group needs to be sent home, we will then move to Year 8 and then 7.
- When Year groups are sent home and asked to remain at home for a certain period of time, they will undertake on-line learning and follow their normal timetable. Work will be set by staff on teams and there will be a variety of teaching and learning techniques used, to include as much face to face sessions as possible.

I very much hope that the staffing levels at the school will not deteriorate to such a degree that we may have to move to on-line learning for any of our learners, but in the eventuality that we do, I reassure you that we are fully prepared for this situation. Pastoral care will continue for our learners, even if working from home. We will always limit the time learners are home learning to a minimum and as soon as staffing levels allow, we will call learners back in.

I'm sure you will appreciate that the next few weeks have the potential to be quite turbulent and that we, as a school, will need to act quickly to any staffing crisis. I again ask for your support in any decision making that the school may have to carry out and be assured that our decisions will always be based on the need to keep our learners and staff as safe as possible, whilst safeguarding their education.

Should you have any concerns then please feel free to contact the school on info@brynelian.conwy.sch.uk

Yours sincerely,

Mr Dave Humphreys
Headteacher.