

Message for parents and learners from Mr D Humphreys, Headteacher. 15/05/20

I hope that this update sees you and your family well.

Over the past 4 weeks our learners have been learning remotely from home – a very strange experience for them. Likewise, our staff have been working from home, setting work and providing feedback on that work – A very strange experience for them too. We have had good engagement with our on-line provision and this is, I feel, in part due to the flexibility of the school's approach.

As per guidance our over-riding feature in looking at providing work for our learners has been the wellbeing of learners, staff and their families.

We have tried to stick to setting work which can fit in to the daily patterns of the home, where there may be many children of a variety of ages along with parents who are desperately trying to continue with their own work, in the home setting. All of this is new, uncharted territory! We have tried to aim for our learners to do a minimum of 2 hours of tasks set by our staff per day, with additional time being used for wellbeing activities and physical activities.

For those who want to do more, we have ample additional work and suggested web sites on our school web site www.brynelian.conwy.sch.uk/-COVID-activities.html

Life really is a balancing act at the moment isn't it? Not only are we, as a school, setting work for our learners to do at home but we are also providing child care facilities for the children of key workers and also some vulnerable learners. My own 2 daughters are now in their 20's but I have to say that I admire the members of my team who are setting work, providing feedback and all this while trying to home school their own children!!!

Kirsty Williams, the Education minister has made an announcement this afternoon where she stated:

'I do not expect that schools or other education settings across Wales will be open for all learners, from all years, all week, anytime soon'

This is confirmation that we are, therefore, in a position of home-schooling for quite a while longer.

Our next round of setting work from staff is due to start on Monday, and as previously the staff will set 2 weeks' worth of work. The difference this time is that there will be a gap of a week in the middle to allow for half term, where staff and learners have a chance to recharge the batteries.

For those of you who want to continue with 'school work' over the half term period, feel free to continue with the work set or, as previously mentioned there is plenty of work to be found on our school web site. Despite this, the school will be open over the half term break to provide a provision for the children of key workers and key vulnerable pupils.

Looking ahead to after half term we obviously have Year 6 who will be becoming anxious as they look forward to be coming up to Ysgol Bryn Elian in September. We have a host of different transition activities for these future Bryn Elian learners. These will be posted on our web site, after half term.

Finally, if I go to mention the work done by staff to help the NHS and the Social Care industry – £8,000 has been raised through our just giving page and so our hard working and dedicated staff are still producing visors (nearly 1,500 distributed so far), uniform bags and Headbands. These are being delivered across North Wales including to the 2 major hospitals in the area, Ysbyty Glan Clwyd and Ysbyty Gwynedd.

Our just Giving page is still open if you, or a friend or relative want to donate allowing us to continue to support the NHS.

<https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/ysgolbrynelian>

Before I close, I would like to thank all of the parents and guardians for their support and understanding in what is a very challenging time for education. Rest assured that all the staff at Ysgol Bryn Elian will continue to adapt and work hard for the benefit of our learners and we couldn't do it without your support.

I would appreciate it if you could share this update so that it can reach as many of our parents and learners as possible.

Take care and stay safe

Dave Humphreys