

Dear Parent/Carer,

As you will already be aware, the Education Minister yesterday announced the reopening of schools from 29th June with one third of students in school at any one time. The term will be extended until 27th July when the summer holidays will start, then the October half term will be extended to two weeks. This means that we will have all year groups in school at some point between 29th June and 27th July.

This initial return will be in preparation for September. It will provide students and teachers with the opportunity to re-engage and check in prior to the summer holiday. The emphasis will be on wellbeing and preparation. It will also be an opportunity to talk to students about their learning and development over the past weeks so that we can listen to our students' views and comments and better prepare for the inevitability of some distance learning from September. I will write to you about learning from September in the next few weeks.

It is important to acknowledge that the return will cause anxiety and as parents you will want to know how we plan to organise the school as safely as possible. My focus and priority will be safety. That will take precedence over everything else. Schools and Local Authorities are now waiting for Welsh Government guidance, which as usual we will adhere to strictly, but in the meantime we have been preparing the school site. I will update you next week when Welsh Government has issued the guidance, but what I do already know is that we will be organising students into zones so that they remain in one part of the school. Only teachers move around. No more than a third of students will be in school at any one time. Classrooms will only have ten students on average and they will be at least 2 metres apart. Some areas will have a one way system and all areas will have sanitiser stations. Social distancing will be implemented with systems to facilitate it. Entry to and from school will be staggered, as will lunch times and break when students will not be permitted to go into other zones. We will not have any meetings or assemblies so obviously, there will be no large or unnecessary gatherings. We have not, as yet, discussed issues such as uniform and lunches and we will need information about transport. I will write again as soon as I have this information.

Year 11 students who plan to return to year 12 would usually have a long summer and return in September, but this year I would like them to come in for sessions with the key stage 5 teachers before the end of term. They can talk through their option choices, talk to teachers about the courses they have chosen, and if they want to, they can begin some preparation. I think they will feel much more settled if they have been in school for a few days between now and September. They can then enjoy the summer holidays, knowing they are organised and ready.

This continues to be a challenging time for all of us and while I know that we have to adhere to some unusual restrictions in school, I will do my best to ensure your children are happy and engaged.

I will write again next week as soon as I have more information.

Kindest regards
Mrs Harding