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Our Ref./Ein Cyf. LP/CG

Your Ref./Eich Cyf.

Contact:/Cysylltwch â: Lynn Phillips

Date:/ Dyddiad: Friday, 5th March 2021



Dear Parent/Carer,

Re. Update - Welsh Government Education Plans

It is likely that you will be aware of the recent Welsh Government announcement confirming arrangements for more pupils to return to face-to-face teaching, subject of course to COVID-19 data continuing to move in the right direction. The Welsh Government's plan includes a return for the remainder of primary pupils (years 3 to 6); Year 11 secondary pupils and some 'check-in' provision for all other year groups.

As always, the top priority for the Council and all our schools is to consider safety and minimise the disruption to learning for our children and young people. We have again worked closely with our Headteachers to agree a common approach to this wider return for learners across Blaenau Gwent.

This includes:

- From Monday, 15th March 2021 all primary pupils will attend at their school full time.
- Year 11 learners will primarily attend at their school from the 15th March, but with the flexibility for an element of remote learning which will be determined by the individual school and communicated to you.
- There will also be some provision for Year 10 pupils and your school will be able to advise you accordingly.
- The Minister for Education has also confirmed that schools should look to offer some limited provision for all remaining secondary pupils (years 7, 8 and 9) in order for them to catch up with their teachers prior to the Easter Holiday. Therefore, during the week commencing 22nd March learners in these year groups will be offered a full day 'check in' session at their school.



The Council welcomes correspondence in Welsh and English and we will communicate with you in the language of your choice, as long as you let us know which you prefer. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to any delay.

Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg a Saesneg a byddwn yn cyfathrebu gyda chi yn eich dewis iaith, dim ond i chi rhoi gwybod i ni pa un sydd well gennych. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn creu unrhyw oedi.



The Council have agreed with schools that there can be a flexible approach to the days and times your child/children will attend at school and these details will be communicated to you by your individual school as soon as possible. These arrangements are to ensure that we can safely manage the numbers of pupils on site following this extended period away. Importantly, where children are not in school on any given day, or where they are shielding or self-isolating, then remote learning arrangements will continue.

Home to School Transport will be available for those who normally access it and full COVID-19 safety controls will be in place as previously. I would remind you that we will be taking a pro-active approach to ensure that learners using transport follow the safety measures in place for everyone's benefit.

We continue to support learners eligible for Free School Meals. In circumstances, where children remain learning from home; self-isolating; shielding or no onsite catering is available, that support will continue to be via direct payments.

The Minister recently reinforced the message that schools remain safe places and that it is important that outside of school, families continue to follow the latest measures in place for Wales, especially in relation to contact with other households. I would urge you to continue to follow this advice in order that we can keep our schools safe and open.

We will continue to offer provision for the children of critical workers where they are eligible and where required (up to the age of 14). I would reiterate that this provision should only be accessed in line with the Welsh Government criteria, and as a last resort where no other childcare options are available to you. Parents accessing this provision will be contacted directly.

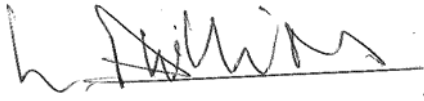
Blaenau Gwent schools will continue to be an active participant in the Wales Test, Trace Protect Service. I would like to take this opportunity to remind parents that your child/children should not attend at school if they are:

- **A confirmed case of COVID-19**
- **Experiencing symptoms of COVID-19**
- **Living with a confirmed case of COVID-19**
- **Identified as a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19**
- **Living with someone with symptoms of COVID-19 and who is awaiting a test result**

This is extremely important as we try to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 in our communities. The Council and our schools will continue to work together, using Welsh Government's guidelines to provide COVID-19 secure, fully risk assessed learning environments and more information on this can be found on our website.

Once again, thank you all for your continued support for our schools and education colleagues during these difficult times.

Best Wishes and please stay safe,



Lynn Phillips
Corporate Director for Education
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council



Blaenau Gwent

County Borough Council

We welcome correspondence in the medium of Welsh or English. / Croesawn ohebiaith trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg neu'r Saesneg.

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