

4th May 2020

Dear parents/carers/pupils

I hope everyone has had a good weekend, following a very busy week of home working. Over the past week, we have been preparing new home learning plans in order to streamline the guidance issued to children and families in Years 7 to 10 from May 4th through to May 17th. We hope that this guidance will provide a useful structure for working at home.

I am sure you are aware that there is ongoing speculation in the news about the return to school for some pupils, potentially after Whitsun. Whilst there is no clear date or published plan, it does appear that we may find out more during the course of this week. Please be assured that we will plan very carefully for any re-opening, including all health and safety measures needed to ensure that all children and staff are protected, safe and confident in returning to school when required to do so.

Qualifications and Grades

Qualifications Wales has now released its consultation on arrangements for the summer 2020 exam series. This consultation sets out how standardisation and appeals will work for this year's GCSE, AS and A level grades.

<https://qualificationswales.org/english/get-involved/consultations-and-surveys/consultation-arrangements-for-summer-2020-exam-series/>

This link will take you to the detailed consultation document, **alongside a shorter summary version aimed at young people and a survey designed to encourage you to share your views.**

Please take some time to read these documents and respond to this consultation before **5pm on Wednesday, 13 May 2020** to help shape the way grades and the appeals process will operate during this exceptional year.

The WJEC examining board has also issued new guidance on its website. Results days are unchanged, and provision should be in place for students to pick up their results from school in August. The dates follows:

- Thursday 13 August for AS and A-level, EPQ and Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate results
- Thursday 20 August for GCSE and Foundation/National Skills Challenge Certificate results

In addition we have been advised by the WJEC that: ***“there may be instances where schools and colleges, or teachers, are put under external pressure from a candidate or their parent/guardian to influence the decision-making on a grade or rank order. Any external pressure must be reported to WJEC who may investigate this as potential candidate malpractice ...***Schools and colleges must not release Centre Assessment Grades and rank order information to candidates, parents/guardians, or any other individuals outside the centre before results days. In line with Qualification Wales' proposals, WJEC will investigate any breaches of confidentiality as potential malpractice or maladministration.

The WJEC guidance in full can be found on its website:

<https://www.wjec.co.uk/media/ua1eokmf/wjec-april-update-for-summer-2020-series-2.pdf>

C – Home (Distance/Online) Learning

The new home learning plans for Years 7-10 will be emailed to pupils and parents on Monday 4th May. These are designed to cover all the homeworking arrangements for the two week period from May 4th to May 17th. If you have any subject specific queries please contact subject teachers via Teams, as Heads of Year will not be able to help you with this. Log-in details have already been shared so we will now assume that everyone understands how to access work in 'Teams', unless advised otherwise. We hope you enjoy the resources and activities prepared.

Please let us know how you get on with these and the new plan!

Please note that any work set by teachers for Year 12 students is **compulsory**, and may be used to determine progress into Year 13 in September.

E - Our own health and wellbeing

We are increasingly mindful about the impact of these uncertain times on the physical and mental wellbeing of everyone. For many, the lockdown will be incredibly difficult and we already know that some children and their families feel anxious or isolated, for lots of reasons. This week, the emphasis is on mental health and self-care. We have already shared some resources relating to this in previous weeks.

Please see the following website resource which may be of use:

<https://www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind/self-care/>

As a community, we will try to stay connected through messages and stories, and we apologise if some of these appear repetitive at times. We just want to ensure that we keep in contact, remember that we are part of the Bryntirion community, and will be reunited as soon as we able to do so.

F – VE Day and Community

Mrs Hawkes sent this message to families last week:

“Next Friday is a national day of celebration to remember the 75th anniversary of Victory in Europe (VE Day). We would like to join in with these celebrations as a school but will be unable to undertake the usual assemblies and discussions, so we need to be creative! The Royal British Legion have issued some comprehensive resources on

<https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/remembrance/teaching-remembrance>

which I would encourage you all to have a look at. From this, we have selected three slides which contain some lovely ideas and we would like pupils to have a go at some of the activities suggested then send us photos so that we can share them as a school community. The Royal British Legion would like us to 'Celebrate, Give Thanks and Reflect'. Suggested activities on the slides attached include:



- Celebrate - Make a cake using ingredients and methods from 1945
- Give Thanks – Write a note saying thank you to the people of 1945, giving reasons to be thankful now
- Reflect – Create a peace poster using the words for ‘peace’ in different languages

We would also like to ask the pupils to send us short video clips (just 3 or 4 seconds) of them waving so that we can incorporate that into a video along with photos of the above work. These clips and photos will be shared on social media.

These are just ideas – if you can think of any other ways of celebrating VE day please take photos or videos of your work and send them along. It’s an important national celebration, but would be lovely to bring together our school community.”

The activities prepared by the history department for this week’s home learning are also related to VE day:

75th anniversary of VE Day

The UK Government has announced revised plans to commemorate the 75th anniversary of VE Day. The new programme will allow members of the public to remember and give thanks to the Second World War generation from the safety of their own homes.



We would like to specifically highlight the following for pupils:

- Historian Dan Snow will be hosting history lessons on Monday 4th, Wednesday 6th and Friday 8th May on YouTube’s Timeline channel that will focus on aspects of the Second World War, including the importance of VE Day.
- All UK historical records available on [ancestry.co.uk](https://www.ancestry.co.uk) will be free from Monday 4th to Sunday 10th May, giving people the opportunity to uncover personal connections to the Second World War.

A party pack has also been collated to help families prepare for a 1940s style afternoon tea party at home on the weekend of 8th to 10th May - <https://ve-vjday75.gov.uk/plan-your-ve-day-party/>

We would love to see how our pupils and their families commemorated VE Day and put together a school display. So we are asking for photos to be posted on Twitter using #VEDay75 and #VE75 and tagging @BryntirionComp and @Bryntirionhist AND/OR photos can be sent to the History department via pupils’ History class Teams.

For full details of plans for the anniversary:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/her-majesty-the-queen-to-send-a-message-to-the-nation-to-mark-75th-anniversary-of-ve-day>



I mentioned last week the new connections our children have made with the residents of care homes in our community. The intergenerational conversations between our children and the elderly residents are genuinely moving and, hopefully, will develop into ongoing communications when we return to school. I have included here one letter from a resident for you to see (names redacted). Many thanks to Claire Hawkes for envisaging this and making the arrangements:

Dear

M has asked for me to write to you as she is unable to write anymore. Firstly, she wanted to thank you from the bottom of her heart for your wonderful letter. She said she can see you put a lot of thought and effort in.

I read and showed your letter to her and she enjoyed it very much. She liked the wordsearch and the flowers on the fringes too. She likes the name H and told me that it is sometimes used as a nickname for people called Heather. Did you know that?

Your jokes made her smile, especially the one about the duck buying lipstick.

M has now been in lockdown and shielding for 5 weeks and she has not seen her son since lockdown started. He used to visit her most days. M finds it hard too and receiving a letter from you did cheer her up.

Joke: Why do Scooba-divers fall backwards into the water? Because if they fall forwards, they fall into the boat!

Lots of love from M

Have a good week everyone and as soon as we have news about next steps, we'll let you know.

Take care

RK Pawar

