

9th July 2020

Dear Parent / Guardian,

We are delighted that the Education Minister for Wales, Kirsty Williams, has today confirmed that all pupils will be able to return to school in September, subject to a continuing, steady decline in the presence of COVID-19 in the community. We are looking forward to welcoming our pupils back to Bryntirion and are planning accordingly. The Minister, following advice from the Welsh Technical Advisory Group, announced that:

- Schools will return to full capacity, with only limited social distancing within contact groups.
- At full operations, a contact group should consist of around 30 children. Some direct or indirect mixing between children in different contact groups will also be unavoidable, such as on transport, receiving specialist teaching or due to staffing constraints.
- Social distancing for adults should remain in line with regulations and guidance.
- Schools will be required to minimise the risk of transmission by taking other mitigating measures using the hierarchy of risk controls.
- Every school should continue to be “Covid Protected” - having carried out risk assessments and mitigated them with a combination of controls such as hand and surface hygiene, one-way systems and so forth.
- If early warning information shows a local incident or outbreak then nearby schools should implement appropriate restriction measures.
- Each school will be provided with a supply of home testing kits.
- The Minister confirmed that the autumn term will start on 1 September and schools that can accommodate all pupils from the start of the term should do so.
- There will be a period of flexibility in recognition that schools may want to focus on priority year groups, such as those new to secondary schools, those sitting exams next summer or those in reception classes. This will also allow time, up to a fortnight, for any planning and reorganisation.

As soon as we have finalised arrangements for the safe return of pupils and staff we will inform you of the details. I know many parents are currently purchasing uniform; you should be aware we will be returning to school in September in uniform, following our current policy, but with the practical awareness that clothes need to be easily washable. With this in mind, for the autumn term there will be no requirement for school ties or blazers; pupils may wear white school shirts without ties or white polo shirts embroidered with the school logo. We will review this policy, along with all other special Covid-19 arrangements when appropriate.

The next few weeks are going to be busy for us at Bryntirion but we are genuinely thrilled at the prospect of having all of our pupils back with us again soon. We have worked through the challenges of the last few months as a community and look forward to continuing to work with you to ensure the best and safest school experience for all of us.

Yours faithfully,

Ravi Pawar - Headteacher

