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### Re-opening Bulletin – 15<sup>th</sup> June 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,  
I hope this newsletter finds you and your loved ones well.

As you know, Welsh Government has decided to partially re-open schools for four weeks between 29<sup>th</sup> June and 24<sup>th</sup> July. This will give your child the opportunity to attend school ***on three occasions*** before the summer holidays. It is a tentative step in the direction of resuming normality in the area of education.

Welsh Government aims to create an opportunity for children to 'check in, catch up and prepare' before the start of September. By doing this now it will give children vital contact time before the summer holiday which will have important social, learning and attainment gap benefits. This will help prepare learners for contact time after the summer holidays and will also allow schools to test operations before the autumn term.

In this bulletin, I will share our current plans to re-open the school in a question and answer format. Please note that **our plans cannot be finalised until we receive additional information from colleagues in the Local Authority (LA)**. For example, until we receive information about transport arrangements, we cannot finalise which groups of pupils can come to school on particular days. I will be in touch as soon as possible to share more detailed plans.

### Re-opening arrangements

#### **Does my child have to attend school in the four-week period from 29<sup>th</sup> June and 24<sup>th</sup> July?**

Children do **NOT** have to attend. Welsh Government have rightly acknowledged the legitimate concerns parents may have about sending their child back to school. Therefore, neither parent nor child will be penalised for not attending. However, all children are expected to engage fully in the online learning. **Children who are shielding for serious underlying health issues should not attend.**

#### **What three days will my child attend?**

This will be decided once we have transport information from the LA. However, please note that Years 11 and 13 will NOT be asked to return to school.

#### **If I do send my child to school, how will you ensure they are safe?**

The school is undertaking a comprehensive risk assessment which will adhere to strict social distancing, a rigorous cleaning regime, and careful management of hand washing and hygiene. To ensure that social distancing is observed, there will be a strict limit on class sizes with the 2 metre



ruling in place. Corridors and areas around school will be signposted and marked to facilitate social distancing. Movement around the school will be severely restricted and staff and pupils limited to clearly assigned areas. The Welsh Government have stated that PPE is not necessary in a classroom situation where social distancing is in place, as described above. Therefore, in these circumstances staff and pupils will not be required to wear PPE. Any pupil who does not comply with social distancing will not be able to attend school.

#### **What will happen if my child or other children or staff show symptoms of the virus?**

If anybody shows symptoms of the virus during the school day, they will be immediately isolated and collected. National guidance will then be followed to control spread of the virus.

#### **How many days/sessions will my child be able to come to school?**

The Welsh Government has stated that schools should aim to make arrangements for every child to attend on THREE DAYS during the four week period. They go on to state that each school is different so that may not be achievable in every school. The Powys guidance, which is being finalised states that it is the aspiration to allow every child access to THREE DAYS during the 4 week period. It will be up to school to define the duration of each occasion/day. At Llanidloes High School we are working on the basis of a session being a whole day. At this point we are unable to provide absolute clarity on start and finish times.

#### **If my child attended the Llanidloes Emergency Childcare Hub, will they be able to attend school more regularly during the four week period?**

In accordance with the LA guidance, your child is only eligible to attend the school's childcare hub **if they regularly attended the childcare hub based at Llanidloes Primary School** between March and the end of May. We know who these pupils are and the LA guidance rules out other pupils accessing this provision. From Thursday 25 June, this emergency childcare provision for secondary pupils will switch to the High School site and run from 8.30am to 4.30pm. Pupils accessing this provision will not be able to attend the three sessions for other pupils in their year group. This is a strict control measure to avoid potential spread of the virus.

#### **What will arrangements be for my child who has significant special needs?**

A member of the Additional Learning Needs or Autistic Spectrum Disorder teams will be in touch to discuss the most appropriate bespoke arrangement where necessary.

#### **How will my child get to and from school safely?**

The Welsh Government have advised that where possible parents should accompany their children to and from school. However, we realise that for many parents and pupils this will not be possible.

For those who travel by bus/minibus, we are awaiting further information from Powys County Council Transport regarding bus travel arrangements. We have been informed that social distancing will be in place on all buses. This will restrict the number that can travel on a bus at any one time. To give you some idea, we have been told that it may be that only seven people could travel on a 56 seater coach, and two people on a 16 seater minibus. As I hope you can see, we are unable to finalise our plans until we know these arrangements.

For those travelling by car, the Welsh Government have stated that no more than two families should travel together and only where social distancing can be observed. Therefore, unless you happen to own a stretch limo, it is difficult to see how families can travel together in cars at all!

### Where should my child go in the morning and leave at the end of the day?

This will be made clear once our plan is finalised. But please note that we will have strict arrival and departure protocols in place, including limited entrances and exits. There will also be clearly marked zones to manage social distancing. More details will follow soon.

### What should my child wear to school?

For the THREE DAYS your child is on site, **they will NOT need to wear school uniform**. They should come to school in clothes that are easily washed. It is important that children attend school in clean clothes for each day they attend.

### What about food and catering arrangements?

**All pupils must bring a packed lunch with them.** No food will be provided at break-time by the schools and no fountains will be in use. Therefore, **pupils will need to bring their own food and drink to school for the whole day.** For pupils entitled to free school meals, parents have received payment or tokens, so these pupils are also required to bring a packed lunch.

Strict handwashing and cleaning before and after food consumption will be required. There will be staggered lunchtimes for those children in school.

### How will break times be arranged?

There will be staggered break and lunchtimes for pupils to manage social distancing. Outside spaces will be utilised as much as possible, but outside games which involve pupils sharing equipment or coming into contact will not be allowed.

### How will toilet areas be organised?

Toilets will be cleaned regularly throughout the day. There will be toilet and handwashing facilities in all areas to which pupils are assigned.

### What equipment should my child bring to school?

- Packed lunch
- Enough drink to last the day
- Stationery: pens, pencils, rubber, ruler, calculator etc.
- Pupils **should not** bring in books or any other items. The local authority has advised against staff physically marking pupil books at this time. Staff should avoid touching any equipment brought into school by pupils, and such equipment should be kept to an absolute minimum. However, staff will continue to provide valuable feedback to pupils in other ways.
- Mobile phones should not be brought into school unless absolutely necessary, and should be stored securely in bags.

### Will my child be doing normal timetabled lessons when attending?

It will not be possible to operate the normal timetable during this period. The Welsh Government has stated that the focus should be on well-being. This is echoed by the LA guidance which states, *'The return to school period is meant for 'check-in, catch up and prepare' and, as such, learning will not be taking place in its traditional form. The strongest focus will be on the wellbeing of all learners.'*

It is also important to note that many staff are unavailable due to childcare or health related reasons.

Nonetheless, where possible we intend to deliver curriculum related learning for pupils in Years 10 and 12.

### What will happen in September?

At the moment, we don't know. However, the Welsh Government have said that schools and pupils need to prepare for a 'new normal.' This will likely be a 'blended learning' approach with a mixture of face-to-face and online learning. Welsh Government will update their guidance in due course to allow schools to prepare and communicate plans for next term.

### And finally...

I appreciate that there will be a mixed response to these arrangements. Some parents want a speedier return to normality. Others feel that it is too early to send their child to school for any period of time. Whatever your views, I would like to thank you for your patient understanding as we implement the Welsh Government and Local Authority guidance, taking into account our current staffing capacity.

I will write again as soon as possible with our final plans to re-open the school. In the meantime, if you have any ideas in relation to this area of planning, please email them to me at [office@llanidloes-hs.powys.sch.uk](mailto:office@llanidloes-hs.powys.sch.uk)

As always, I would like to thank you for messages of support and constructive feedback. If there is anything we can do to help you in any way at all, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Take care,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Daniel Owen', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Daniel Owen (Headteacher)