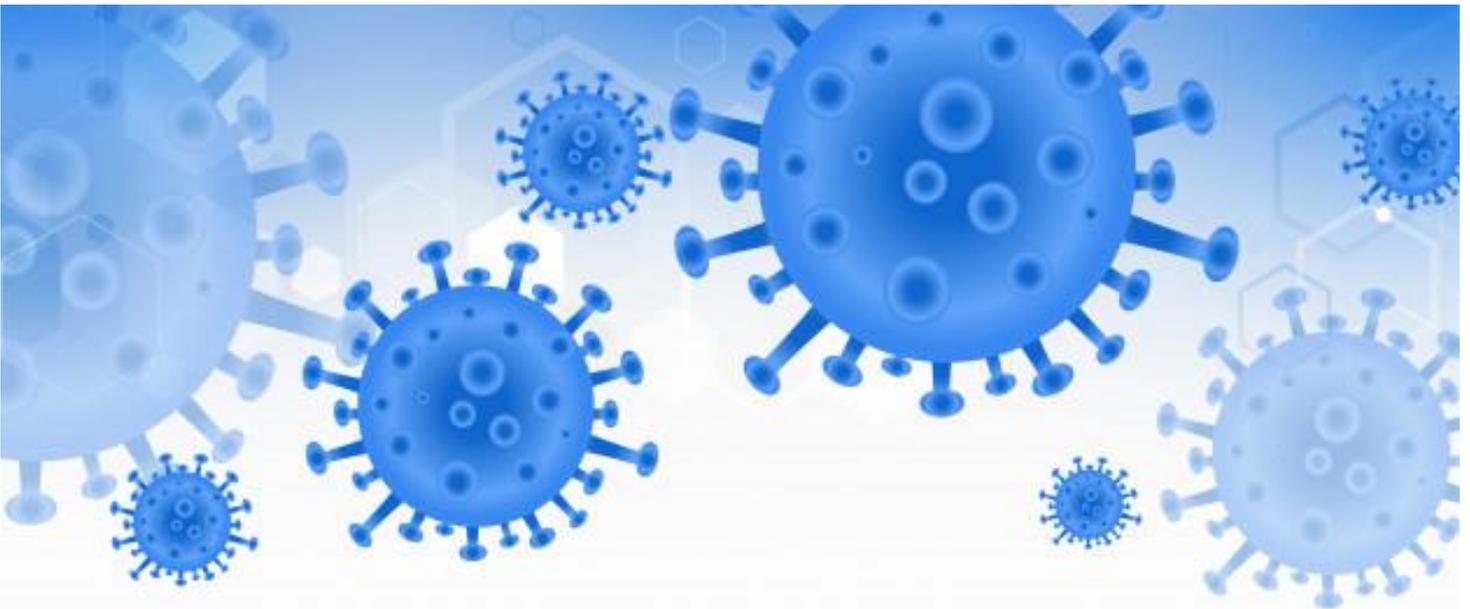




“Check in, Catch Up, Prepare for summer and September”

A guide for students and families



COVID-19
CORONAVIRUS

Dear Parents and Carers

Over the following pages you will find details of the school's provision over the coming weeks. The position in Swansea was finally clarified by the local authority at 4.45 p.m. on Tuesday afternoon and the position is that schools will now open for three weeks, beginning next Monday.

We had made detailed plans for four weeks. This is what we were told to do by Welsh Government, which continues to say that this is the best thing for our learners. This view is shared by myself and members of the senior leadership team and by our professional associations. The City and County of Swansea has taken a different view.

Practically speaking, this is the reason we have not issued this advice until now. It would have been confusing and misleading. As it is, we have spent the last day and a half revising all of our plans for four weeks and trying to incorporate the most important elements into three.

I know we have thrown a fair bit of information at you over the period of this pandemic and that this information has, inevitably, changed over time as the advice from government changes. However, I am asking you to read this information carefully in order that you know what arrangements we have put in place and the part that you and your children have to play in them.

We are so looking forward to seeing our pupils back. It has been too long. I guess we are all out of the habit of school as it used to be. Gently, step by step, we need to get back into the habit and mind-set of learning. This is where that journey begins.

I trust that you are all safe and well and continue to remain so.

Hugh Davies

Provision

Schools in Wales formally reopen to pupils on 29th June until 17th July to facilitate a “[Check in, Catch Up, Prepare for summer and September](#)”. This is primarily an opportunity for staff to provide face-to-face support to enhance the online provision for all students, building on the core principles embedded in the “[Stay Safe and Stay Learning](#)” policy already in place. This work will sit alongside the continuing provision for the children of key workers and the extended provision for our most vulnerable learners.

This is not a return to “normal school” but an opportunity to begin to shape a new normal as we enter the next phase of recovery. Whilst we are able to increase our on-site provision for learners, requirements to maintain strict 2 metre social distancing will significantly reduce the number of students and staff that we can safely accommodate at any one time.

Students in Years 7, 8,9 and 10 will be able to attend school for timetabled sessions only. Each session will be for half a day and sessions are timetabled on the same day and at the same time each week for the remainder of this academic year. This will allow us all to begin to build routines again. Years 7, 8 and 9 will have one timetabled session per week whilst Year 10 students will have 2 sessions per week, to facilitate their preparations for external exams. Details about when your child will be able to attend school will be communicated to you separately. Year 12 students will follow a slightly different timetable after next week, details of which will be provided to all Year 12 students during their first face to face session (or via email if they are not present). This purpose of these face-to face sessions is to enhance and support a blended learning approach, it will not replace the need for students to engage with their studies remotely at home and it is expected that all students will continue to complete assignments through Google Classroom.

We cannot return to business as usual and teaching sessions cannot be the same as ‘normal lessons’ at the moment. Whilst the organisation of learning may be unfamiliar, we have tried to ensure that learners are taught by their own teachers, as far as possible, to help them to positively reconnect with their learning in school.

The school site will be divided into three distinct areas which will operate independently, each with its own dedicated entry and exit point and toilet facilities. Within each area, students will be further divided into smaller teaching groups, with learners taught within these groups for each session. Arrival and departure times will be staggered to allow students to maintain social distancing as they enter and exit the site. Each pupil will be allocated an arrival time and a point of entry onto the site. It is absolutely essential that your child understands that they must adhere to these arrangements to protect themselves and others.

When they arrive at school, they will need to line up at the correct entrance on the yellow markings to ensure social distancing is adhered to. As they enter school, thermal cameras will be used to check their temperature and they must use the hand sanitisers provided. Pupils will be escorted by a member of staff to their allocated venue. Once at the venue your child will need to sit at a specified desk. Each student will be given a pack of writing resources (pens and an exercise book) for their sole use. It is important that this pack is

brought to every session as we move forwards, as we cannot permit students to share or borrow resources.

Most teaching will be based within the larger venues within school. This allows us to slightly exceed the minimum space requirement for learners to allow social distancing guidelines to be properly adhered to. Typically, we expect to have 15 students in a space that is capable of accommodating up to 25 individuals with 2m social distancing. Students will work predominantly in this main venue for each session. Classrooms will be used on a limited basis to work with individuals or very small groups of learners. As and when social distancing guidelines are relaxed, we will review additional use of classrooms.

For all learners, the sessions in school will allow a range of staff to work interactively with students to better support remote learning. Students will have the opportunity to engage in discussion work with subject specialists and ask key questions about their learning. This face-to face contact is a key element in supporting our move towards an effective blended learning approach.

Health and wellbeing

The wellbeing of students and staff is of vital importance. As we return to school we recognise that some of our students will be anxious. The disruption to established routines and the impact of lockdown have made this a very challenging and stressful time. To help support our students, we are placing a strong emphasis on health and wellbeing within the planned curriculum. Alongside formal timetabled sessions providing general support and guidance, we will facilitate time for each student to have an opportunity for a personal conversation with an adult they trust in order for them to discuss their own wellbeing and learning needs. Our experienced and dedicated pastoral guidance team will also be available to undertake more extensive work with any students who may require additional support.

Attendance

All students will have the opportunity to attend sessions in school during the remainder of this academic year. The decision regarding your child's return to school will depend on your own individual circumstances and we respect this; the Welsh Government has made it clear that there will be no penalty for those parents/carers whose child does not attend school this term. However, should you make the decision to keep your child at home, he/she will still be expected to continue to engage with, and complete, work at home. We understand that some of our students who want to return may not be able to do so yet for medical reasons (such as those shielding) and we will continue to support these learners through our remote learning provision.

Under no circumstances should students/staff attend school if they:

- Feel unwell, have any of the three identified COVID-19 symptoms (a new continuous cough, a high temperature or loss of taste or smell) or they have tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 14 days.
- Live in a household with someone who has symptoms of COVID-19 or who has tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 14 days.

Other Key Information

Social Distancing

The school has taken steps to ensure social distancing measures are in place across the school setting. In conjunction with good personal hygiene protocols, effective social distancing is essential to keep students, staff and their families safe. There are visual reminders throughout the school and everyone has a personal responsibility to adhere to the arrangements put in place to keep us all safe.

Uniform

Students will NOT be required to wear uniform but may do so if they wish. Clothing should be appropriate for school, comfortable and easily washable. In line with health advice, where possible, all clothing should be machine washed after each session in school.

Food/Drinks

Each student will need to bring in their own full water bottle as water fountains cannot be used at this time. In addition, there will be no catering provision in school, so food and drink will not be available to purchase. Students should refrain from eating whilst in school but the very small number who have a specific, established medical need may bring in a suitable snack. These snacks must not be shared with others and all wrappers etc. should be taken home for disposal.

Equipment

Students will not be permitted to borrow or share any materials to reduce the risk of transmission of the virus. In the first session each learner will receive a resource pack containing writing materials. This pack will be used by students to complete the work set in the on-site sessions and needs to be brought to every session.

Transport

Parents/carers are strongly advised to make their own transport arrangements for their children to attend school.

Social distancing should be maintained on the journey to and from school.

People from different households should not travel together unless social distancing can be maintained.

Students should avoid using public transport where possible; where it is used, public health guidance should be followed.

Staff/student illness

Any student or member of staff who becomes unwell, displaying possible symptoms of COVID-19, will be sent home. Students displaying symptoms of coronavirus will be isolated in a designated area of the school so that they do not come into contact with other students and as few staff as possible, until they can be collected. Where a symptomatic student is waiting to go home, he/she will use separate toilet facilities to minimise the spread of infection. Parents /carers need to be aware that, for the safety of other students and staff, they may need to be available to collect their child in the event of them becoming symptomatic. Staff supervising students who become unwell will have appropriate personal protective equipment for use in this situation. All areas used by a symptomatic student will be deep cleaned once vacated.

At entry points to the school, thermal imaging cameras will be used to identify individuals who may have a fever. The cameras will not diagnose Covid-19 infection but will provide an indication of individuals who may be unwell and potentially symptomatic. It is hoped that this will provide additional reassurance to parents/carers, staff and pupils. Individuals with a temperature above 37.8 °C will not be able to access provision in school and will need to return home.

Use of face coverings

Social distancing and good personal hygiene (regular and thorough hand washing, catching a cough or a sneeze in a tissue or covering the mouth or nose with a sleeve) are the most effective methods of preventing the spread of Coronavirus. Since 2m social distancing measures are in place, staff and pupils are not required to use personal protective equipment when carrying out normal educational activities or when walking around the premises. However, the school recognises that individuals may wish to wear a face covering if this supports their wellbeing and confidence. In this situation, the face covering should be worn to cover the mouth and nose. Face coverings may not be transferred between individuals and non-disposable face coverings should be stored in a plastic bag when not in use.

Access to on-site provision

Where a student is unable or unwilling to follow the essential safety measures that are in place including social distancing, arrival/departure times, site entry/exit instructions and instructions from staff within each session, then the school may need to withdraw on site provision for the individual concerned to protect others. Learning at home would continue to be facilitated via the online provision.

How can I help support my child's return to school?

Returning to a school routine after such a long break may make some students more anxious than usual. There are some things that you can do to help support you child and give them the confidence to make their return a positive experience.

Reinforce the principles around good personal hygiene (regular and thorough hand washing, catching a cough or a sneeze in a tissue or covering the mouth or nose with a sleeve). Make sure that they understand what social distancing means and why it is important.

Check they know when they are timetabled to be in school, what time they need to arrive and which entrance they have to use. Go through the arrival routine with them so that they know what will be expected. It is really important that the arrival time allocated to your child is observed. For the first time ever in Olchfa, we don't want pupils to be either late or early to school. Please do not send your child into school before or after the time allocated to them. This is to ensure that we are able to maintain social distancing on entry and exit to the site.

You may find it helpful to run through the following checklist with your child before they return to help them prepare.

Clothing	Uniform is not required Comfortable, appropriate for school and easily washable. Wash after each session in school	
Equipment	Have they remembered their resource pack (Which will be provided in week 1)	
Drink	Have they packed a filled water bottle?	
Day	Which day(s) should they attend school?	
	What time do they need to get to school?	
Entry to school	Which gate do they need to use?	
Location in school	Where do they need to go for their session?	
Going home	When will the session end?	
	How are they going to get home?	

Returning to school will present challenges for us all but we need to be **ready** to embrace these next steps in order to move forwards.

It is the personal responsibility of every individual to show **respect** for others by adhering to the health and safety arrangements put in place to ensure that we can all stay as **safe** as possible.

“Working together we will secure equity and excellence for pupils as they check in, catch up, and prepare for summer and September.”

Kirsty Williams, Minister for Education, June 3rd 2020