

10-07-20

Dear Parent/Carer,

Yesterday, Kirsty Williams, Minister for Education announced that schools will re-open for all learners in September. To ensure clarity, I wanted to share as much information as I can with you, regarding the arrangements that we will need to put in place in readiness for September.

The past few months have been challenging and many of our learners have been anxious about a loss of learning and not being able to see their friends. I therefore welcome the Education Minister's plan which will enable us to prepare for the safe reopening of schools in September.

- Planning and preparation days will take place at the start of term to enable staff to review our risk assessments, processes and associated systems to ensure schools can welcome pupils and staff back safely.
- During the first week some specific groups of learners may need to be prioritised, such as those who have not attended this term, Year 7, 10 and 11 for Secondary and Early Years and Year 6 in the Primary sector.
- From the second week of term, we will maximise the number of learners in attendance leading to a full return on the 14<sup>th</sup> of September when school attendance will be compulsory.

Further guidance will be issued by the Welsh Government early next week, and it is expected that this will be continuously updated as the situation evolves. Each school will have local challenges to address, including the availability of staffing. This and other specific areas such as school transport, catering, cleaning, etc. will be worked through in detail over the next few weeks.

It is our understanding that there will be no requirement to provide childcare for critical workers when schools re-open in September.

Given the current extraordinary circumstances, I am aware that many hard-working staff in schools, learners and their families may be under additional emotional, financial and psychological pressure. The Local Authority will continue to work to ensure the best support package is offered to ensure the ongoing wellbeing needs of all learners and individuals are met at this time.

As our plans evolve further, supportive information will also be provided through the Local Authority website and social media channels.

Your school will keep you updated with their specific arrangements for the start of the Autumn term.

I would like to thank you for the co-operation and dedication you have provided over these difficult few months and I know that working together, we will ensure the Autumn term return to school will be successful.

Your sincerely,

*Gareth Morgans*

**Gareth Morgans, BAdd/BEd; MGw/MSc**

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You are welcome to contact me in Welsh or English