

Dear Parent / Guardian,

4th January 2021

The Welsh Government has announced that schools will continue with online learning until at least January 18. This decision has been made as a result of medical and scientific advice and the rising number of new cases which is putting considerable pressure on the health service.

While schools may be safe environments for education, there is an impact on the R number of associated activity around schools.

The position will be reviewed regularly by Welsh Government, working with the WLGA, and taking into account the latest scientific and medical data available, with the aim of deciding when learners can return to school safely.

Your school will provide you with further information and support on learning from home during this time.

Keeping our schools open is one of main priorities, however, the situation is very serious and it is important that we follow the advice to stay home and protect our health service.

Schools will provide childcare for children of critical workers as well as vulnerable children where absolutely necessary, however, it is important that children remain at home wherever possible, as this is the safest place for everyone.

Our aim is to ensure that those working on the frontline can continue to undertake their duties if they have no access to childcare, whilst also mitigating the risks to our children and staff in school settings.

We define frontline critical workers as follows:

- Health service employees
- Police
- Fire, ambulance and rescue services
- Essential council workers
- School staff
- Social services
- Care services*

Gareth Morgans, BAdd/BEEd; MGw/MSc

Cyfarwyddwr Addysg a Gwasanaethau Plant,
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Director of Education & Children's Services,
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**Workers in care services are defined as the council's care homes, private care homes, childcare settings and those providing home care in people's homes within the authority.*

Provision is for primary pupils, under 12s in secondary or pupils that attend specialist provision or pupil referral units.

We are urging parents to please consider very carefully whether it is absolutely essential that you have childcare from your school.

Parents should not apply for childcare if they are not scheduled to work and have not exhausted all other possible childcare options; and if they or their partner are able to work from home.

It may be necessary for a Headteacher to request further supporting evidence (e.g. ID badge) confirming role to establish if parents meet eligibility.

If your child is entitled to free school meals, you will receive payment whilst they are learning from home, for further information on this as well as the latest school updates and FAQs please visit our website carmarthenshire.gov.wales/education.

Thank you again for your co-operation and support during this time, if you have any questions at all please speak to your school.

Your sincerely,

Glynog Davies

Executive Board Member for Education

Gareth Morgans

Director of Education and Children's Services

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