



5 January 2021

Update following Welsh Government Statement for Schools

Dear Parents and Carers,

In light of the developing situation regarding Covid-19, we have been looking in detail at the latest statement from Welsh Government for schools, issued last night and this morning. You can see the full statement from Welsh Government at the end of this letter (the announcement by Boris Johnson last night is just for England).

The key points are:

- The Welsh Government's education minister Kirsty Williams has now confirmed that all schools, colleges and independent schools in Wales should move to online learning until 18 January.
- Schools can remain open for children of essential workers and vulnerable pupils.
- Schools can remain open for students who need to complete essential exams or assessments, and students can travel to school to undertake them.
- There has been additional confirmation that all childcare settings including nurseries can remain open.

We have considered the situation very carefully, following the advice of the Welsh Government and Public Health Wales, in conjunction with the Welsh Independent School Council and the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship, to ensure the health of our whole community, including pupils, staff and families. We have made the following plans for the on-going education of the pupils:

- **Kindergarten will be open in-building** from tomorrow Wednesday 6 January **for the following children ONLY:**
 - ANY Kindergarten child who is the child of an essential worker, or who is classed as a vulnerable child ***NB Children must be booked in for this - please see guidance on this at the end of this letter.**
 - All Kindergarten children UNDER statutory school age i.e.
 - children who are 3 or 4 years of ages AND
 - children who turn 5 between 4 January and 26 March 2021
- **Kindergarten will provide outreach learning packs and on-line resources** for:
 - children who are not in one of the above groups who can attend in-building
 - children who choose to remain at home

The outreach learning packs will be available for pick up on Friday afternoon and the on-line resources will be posted in Google Classroom tomorrow, Wednesday, lunchtime. We will send information and a reminder of how to log in and get technical support.

We are not able to provide in-building provision for Kindergarten children of statutory school age as they fall into the legal definition of the 'primary' category and are therefore subject to the rules of Welsh Government for primary schools. We are urgently seeking further clarification from Welsh Government, via the Welsh Independent Schools Council, about whether our older statutory school age Kindergarten children can attend in-building given that our Early Years is up to age 6. However, based on the more detailed guidance provided already in England, we do not think this is likely to be the case. We will let you know if this changes.

- **All Classes (Lower School and Upper School)** will move to online-learning from Thursday 7 January to Friday 15 January. We will send information tomorrow about on-line learning including timetables and a reminder of how to log in and get technical support. We will make provision for any materials that are needed and conduct an online survey regarding access to technology at home.
- **Class 11/12** students may be able to come into School for some specific practical assessments for the NZCSE qualification. We will confirm this to Class 11/12 students and parents once firmed up.
- **We can offer school day provision to Class pupils who are classed as vulnerable, or are children of essential workers**, from 8.50am to 3.30pm from Thursday 7 January to Friday 15 January. ***NB Pupils must be booked in for this - please see guidance on this at the end of this letter.**
- **Wraparound Care** will operate normal hours during this period (Breakfast Club 8.00-9.00, Afternoon Care 1.00-3.30, Afterschool 3.30-4.30/6.00) and will be open to:
 - **Kindergarten children** who are eligible to attend in-building provision (as detailed above)
 - **Class Pupils** who are eligible to attend the school day provision as children of essential workers, or who are classed as vulnerable
 - The above children can be booked in for drop-in sessions or regular weekly bookings in Wraparound Care book at the normal rate by email or phone call to Nicola parents@cardiffsteiner.org.uk. There is no notice period for ending Wraparound Care and, during this period we will not require a minimum attendance for regular weekly bookings.

Please follow national and local advice and keep us updated on any relevant developments in your family's health so that we can update our measures as necessitated by this. We will continue to give you information and advice as it made available to us, and will do everything we can to support you and to help you support your children.

Thank you for your support and all that you are doing at this difficult time. We extend our heartfelt best wishes to you all and your families. In the meantime, do stay safe.



Miranda Knight, Anna Podesta, Brigid Bowen
for the School Management Team, College and Trustees

Information on Essential Workers & Vulnerable Children

It is important that we all do what we need to do to reduce the spread of Coronavirus and stay away from each other as advised, but we also recognise our responsibility to enable front line workers to do their jobs. In these hugely challenging times, Schools are an essential part of the effort to respond to keeping the NHS running as well as other services which are vital to how we live.

We are running a small, necessary provision during this time for our pupils who are vulnerable or are children of parents of 'essential workers' - those whose work is critical to the COVID-19 response. You can see a [list of 'essential workers' here](#). **Vulnerable children** include those with safeguarding needs and supported by social care, which include children with care and support or support plans, children on the child protection register and looked after children, young carers, disabled children and those with Statements of special educational needs.

The service is available for these pupils from from 8.50am to 3.30pm Monday to Friday. They can also be booked into Wraparound Care at the normal rate by email or phone call to Nicola parents@cardiffsteiner.org.uk

An appropriate provision and rhythm is developed for the pupils. Those pupils attending who would be participating in the remote learning programme will be supported to access this along with their classmates, and should bring a suitable device with them for this (please let us know if this is difficult for you there may be another child from their class attending who they can share with).

BOOKING IN - IMPORTANT

All pupils who are vulnerable or are children of parents of 'essential workers' **MUST BOOK IN**. If you are eligible and likely to need to use this provision please contact Nicola by email to parents@cardiffsteiner.org.uk

- **BY 5.00pm TODAY** let us know if and when your child will be attending on this Thursday 7 and Friday 8 January
- **BY 5.00pm FRIDAY** if and when your child will be attending on next week 11-15 January

You will need to complete a booking form when you first attend.

Government advice on this is as follows:

The government has given clear guidance on self-isolation, household isolation and social distancing and the most recent scientific advice on how to further limit the spread of COVID-19 is clear. If children can stay safely at home, they should, to limit the chance of the virus spreading.

That is why the government has asked parents to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and asked schools to remain open only for those children who absolutely need to attend. It is important to underline that schools remain safe places for children. But the fewer children making the journey to school, and the fewer children in educational settings, the lower the risk that the virus can spread and infect vulnerable individuals in wider society.

Many parents working in these essential sectors may be able to ensure their child is kept at home. And every child who can be safely cared for at home should be.

Please, therefore, follow these key principles:

- **If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be.**
- If a child is vulnerable or has a parent who is critical to the Covid-19 response, then provision should be available for them.
- Parents should not rely for childcare upon those who are advised to be in the stringent social distancing category such as grandparents, friends, or family members with underlying conditions.
- Parents should also do everything they can to ensure children are not mixing socially in a way which can continue to spread the virus. They should observe the same social distancing principles as adults.

Keeping you safe and informed

If your child is feeling unwell for whatever reason, then they should not come into School. This is even more important if your child is showing COVID-19 symptoms.

It is essential that children do not attend if they or a member of their household has symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) or is self-isolating.

Please see the latest Welsh government guidance here gov.wales/coronavirus

And Welsh Government [advice on self-isolating here](#). This applies to:

- people who have received a positive test result for COVID-19
- people with symptoms of COVID-19 who are waiting for a test result, or who have not been tested and do not require hospital treatment, who must remain at home for the appropriate self-isolation period (further details below)
- people living in households with someone who shows symptoms that may be caused by COVID-19 or who has received a positive test result for COVID-19
- people of all ages including children

The most important symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of any of the following:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness. However, if you have any of the symptoms above you must stay at home and arrange to have a test to see if you have COVID-19 – go to testing to arrange. See information on [Testing and tracing for coronavirus](#)

Statement from Welsh Government's Education Minister Kirsty Williams

“The situation in Wales and across the UK remains very serious. Today, the four UK Chief Medical Officers have agreed that the UK is now at the highest level of risk, Joint Biosecurity Council level 5.

In the light of that decision the Welsh Government, in consultation with the WLGA and Colegau Cymru, has agreed that all schools, colleges and independent schools should move to online learning until January 18th.

As a government we will use the next two weeks to continue to work with local authorities, schools and colleges to plan for the rest of term.

This is the best way to ensure that parents, staff and learners can be confident in the return to face to face learning, based on the latest evidence and information.

Schools and colleges will remain open for children of critical workers and vulnerable learners, as well as for learners who need to complete essential exams or assessments. On this basis Special Schools and PRU's should remain open if possible.

We had initially given schools flexibility in the first two weeks of term to decide when to reopen based on local circumstances.

But it is now clear that a national approach of online learning for the first fortnight of term is the best way forward.

We know that schools and colleges have been safe and secure environments throughout the pandemic.

However, we also know that education settings being open can contribute to wider social mixing outside the school and college environment.

We are confident that schools and colleges have online learning provision in place for this immediate period,

Universities in Wales have already agreed a staggered start to term. Students should not return to universities for face to face learning until they are notified that they can do so.

Wales remains in the highest level of restrictions. Everyone must stay at home.”