

Update and School Plans

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are continuing to develop a clearer picture of what School life will look like for you and your child/ren and ourselves in this uncertain and changing world. As teachers we are educating ourselves so that we can deliver an effective learning programme that honours our curriculum and somehow keeps the indispensable human connections alive between us. As the whole world is adjusting and changing we are looking on this as an opportunity to apply creative solutions and learn some new tricks.

Community Life

The next few months will be emotionally taxing and a priority at this time is the emotional and mental health of our immediate community and we are looking for ways to keep channels of pastoral care support open for pupils and their families. One way we will address this is to investigate ways of enabling a platform for parents in our community to talk to each other, offer advice, pass on useful articles, videos, suggestions of things to do, share experiences and offer each other a piece of their hearts. It will be good to keep a tangible sense of the School to which we all belong and look forward to returning to and standing in each-others company again.

Remote Learning

We are drawing up our timetable of lessons and activities and will be sending you information on what this looks like and how to access it as it develops in the early parts of next week. We anticipate that the two weeks before Easter will be a little trial and error and we will be asking you for your feedback on what works well, what could make a difference, what you might be needing from us. Currently under discussion is how we keep a real sense of each Classes' community alive, how we communicate on a very regular basis with you, as well as how we deliver the best lessons possible ensuring all pupils are able to engage and progress in skills and interest with individual needs supported remotely. You will appreciate that this will look very different in each Class as appropriate to their age.

Some individual teachers have sent, or are planning to send, pieces of work to their Class with instruction or suggestion, between now and the launch of our platform. However we are planning to try to launch the full suite of coordinated remote learning with attendant timetables that cover all subjects by next Thursday, 26 March 2020. Please watch this space.

At the moment of writing this there is no certainty pupils will return to Schools after the Easter break but we are planning for this eventuality and will refine and adapt our on line classrooms over Easter after this first trial fortnight. All staff will be operating from the School building so we will

be attending as normal and all the normal remote channels of communication will be open to you, email, telephone, letter. So long as individual staff are able to attend and not under requirements to self-isolate. In the event of the building having to be closed or staff having to work from home we will be building in provision for remote learning to continue safely from the homes of teachers.

Essential Workers

We will be 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.

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 will become an essential part of the effort to respond. Schools and school staff will be central to keeping the NHS running as well as other services which are vital to how we live.

The service will be available for these children from 8.00am to 6.00pm Monday to Friday and an appropriate provision and rhythm will developed with them. 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).

All staff and teachers will be involved in the running of this provision as available and appropriate and it will be overseen by Kindergarten and Class Teachers. Please would you let us know by email to parents@cardiffsteiner.org.uk if you are eligible and likely to need to use this provision. If you are an essential worker please can you let us know your job and which category of essential worker you are in, and we will draw up a register and send further information.

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.

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- If a child needs specialist support, is vulnerable or has a parent who is critical to the Covid-19 response, then provision in an educational or childcare setting 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.

We had a lovely last day of face-to-face learning today before moving to remote learning next week. The pupils were joyful, vibrant and exuding an amazing sense of youthful resilience and adaptability. Staff were embracing, with whole-hearted commitment and a unity of purpose, to do whatever it takes to support the children and you, our community, through the challenges and changes that lie ahead.

Keep Safe and Well.

With warmest wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anna Podesta, Miranda Knight and Brigid Bowen'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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