



2 January 2021

Update for School Return

Dear Parents and Carers,

A Happy New Year to you all. We hope you have had a peaceful and safe Christmas break.

We have been considering the latest position for Schools:

- **Welsh Government** and the Welsh Local Government Association have agreed to a flexible approach during the first two weeks of term to enable schools to put in place arrangements which reflect their specific circumstances and are guided by public health and safety considerations. As schools assess their staffing levels their expectation is that schools will be providing face to face learning for the majority of pupils by Monday 11 January, leading to a full return in the days before Monday 18 January at the latest (see joint announcement overleaf).
- **Cardiff Council's** position is that schools will provide distance learning to pupils from term start, with provision for vulnerable learners and essential worker childcare during that time where they have the capacity to do so. From Monday 11 January, the expectation is that all pupils will return for face-to-face learning [see details](#)

College have considered the situation carefully, along with the health and wellbeing of our pupils, staff and families, and have decided to amend our first week of term as follows:

- **Kindergarten** will return as normal on Wednesday 6 January (Kindergarten start a day earlier than Classes in our [School Calendar](#) this term).
- **All Classes (Lower School and Upper School)** will start term on Thursday 7 and Friday 8 January with online learning, and return to in-building learning on Monday 11 January (subject to any further guidance from Welsh Government, Cardiff Council or exceptional local circumstances).
- We can offer school day provision to **Class pupils who are vulnerable, or are children of essential workers**, from 8.50am to 3.30pm on Thursday 7 and Friday 8 January. Please identify yourself as such and book in with Nicola by email to parents@cardiffsteiner.org.uk by **3.00pm on Tuesday 5 January** so that we can plan provision.
- **Wraparound Care** will operate normal hours **from the start of term**. In the first week Kindergarten children who are booked in will be able to attend as normal. Class pupils who are vulnerable, or are children of essential workers, can book in at the normal rate by email or phone call to Nicola parents@cardiffsteiner.org.uk

Please see some key advice below. If you have any questions please just email us on parents@cardiffsteiner.org.uk

With many thanks for your continued support.



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

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](#)

Welsh Local Government Association statement on the return of schools in January

Following extensive discussions a common approach has been agreed by the Welsh Government and the Welsh Local Government Association for the return to school in January.

With transmission levels continuing to increase across Wales, and uncertainty over what impact that might have on school staffing levels over the Christmas break, there will be some flexibility built in at the beginning of term. However, minimising disruption to our children and young people's education remains a priority and face to face learning should be the default position unless there are clear public health and safety reasons for moving to remote learning.

For most of our learners, the new school term will start on 4th January, although there will be some schools who have planned INSET days in this first week. As schools assess their staffing levels ahead of, and during, the first week, our expectation is that schools will be providing face to face learning for the majority of their pupils by 11th January, leading to a full return in the days before 18th January at the latest.

Where a school has moved to remote learning because of exceptional and specific local circumstances, local authorities and schools will be expected to make arrangements for vulnerable learners and the children of critical workers (including school staff) to attend, as is the case now.

A WLGA spokesperson said:

"The plan to return to schools in January will give some certainty, whilst also allowing for flexibility to take account of local circumstances."

"Teachers, school staff, learners, and parents and carers' response has been remarkable throughout this challenging year. It has not been easy, and we thank them for their continued patience and perseverance to help keep our communities safe."

"To help curb the rapid spread of the virus, we must all continue to do all we can to protect ourselves, each other and our communities."

A Welsh Government spokesperson said:

"We all recognise that these are unprecedented times and that we have to be agile in how we respond to the impact the virus has on our communities."

"By agreeing to a flexible approach during the first two weeks of the new school term in January enables our schools to put in place proportionate arrangements which reflect their specific circumstances and is guided by public health and safety considerations."

"We know from our children and young people that they learn best when in the classroom receiving face to face learning so any measures we put in place must look to minimise further disruption to their education."