



YSGOL GYNRADD A MEITHRIN STRYD SIORS GEORGE STREET PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL

Wainfelin Road, Pontypool, Torfaen NP4 6BX

Wednesday 9 September 2020

Dear parent/carers

We are just a few days in to the start of the new school year but I wanted to provide you with some timely feedback on our restart.

I will add some detail below, but it is very largely positive news. There are a couple of points (around traffic and social distancing) that we really need your help to improve on. It is early days at present and we are all still getting used to different ways of doing things but I know that working together we can help to keep our children, families and staff safe.

PUPILS RETURN TO CLASSES

I am pleased to report that the first few days with pupils in school have gone very well. Children have responded sensibly to the safety measures that are in place. School staff are providing consistent messages and actions to make sure that good routines are followed and that risks are being minimised effectively.

We still have a way to go with this and further changes, including the restart of breakfast club and the reintroduction of hot meals, will provide more logistical challenges. I am enormously grateful for the energy and professionalism of all of our staff. School is always busy, but the additional measures mean that everyone is under an extra burden to make sure that school runs safely while ensuring that pupils continue to have a positive and rewarding experience. Every member of our staff team is committed to achieving this and seeing how happy pupils are to be back clearly demonstrates the good they doing.

DROP-OFF & COLLECTION

Many thanks to parents/carers for your support with the new drop-off and collection arrangements. Clearly, having such a large number of children and adults converge at set times presents challenges and we are continuing to tweak our approach. However, I am pleased to say that by the midpoint of this first week of full operation, nearly all pupils are in class by 9.00 and the day in school is starting swiftly.

I know that accessing the area around school, for instance for parking, has been difficult. This is not a new state of affairs. We have deliberately kept the staggered start/finish times relatively close as we know that many pupils have siblings. The area around school is unavoidably busy. Despite this, I am asking all parents/carers to help make drop-off and pick up times as safe as possible by:

- **Observing strict 2m social distancing when waiting with pupils or picking them up**
It remains a requirement that all adults stay 2 metres apart wherever possible. Drop-off and pick-up times should **not be used as an opportunity to socialise**. The current lockdown in Caerphilly is a very clear reminder to us all that infection rates can rise rapidly. As a school, we need everyone to act responsibly to avoid this and the possibility that schools may be forced to close again.

- **Driving with care**

Several cars have been seen driving at inappropriate speed on the roads neighbouring school. I appreciate how frustrating it can sometimes be to be stuck in traffic when you need to be somewhere in a hurry. However, it is never acceptable to exceed the speed limit around the school and place children and family members at risk. Please don't.

- **Parking with consideration for others**

A few parents/carers have selfishly double parked and/or left vehicles unattended. This means that traffic is stopped and others are been blocked in by abandoned cars. Again, this is not acceptable. Not only does it send completely the wrong message to pupils, it causes unnecessary hold-ups in traffic, including for emergency vehicles using the ambulance station. Clearly, it is not worth putting other people's lives at risk when showing some patience is all that is needed. It is not long ago that our NHS heroes were being rightly applauded every week – let's not make their work any harder.

I do appreciate how busy the streets around school are at the start and end of the day. We are all reliant on one another to act safely, responsibly and with consideration. Staff in school have neither the capacity nor the authority to enforce these measures. However, do not take offence if a member of staff reminds you to socially distance or to park with care. This is something we must all do together.

We are keeping all of our arrangements and control measures under review. Where we feel it is possible to improve on these we will do so and make sure that you are kept up to date with any changes. It is clear from the last couple of days that routines are beginning to settle and I'm sure that with cooperation between everyone this will only get better. Thank you.

PUPILS WHO HAVE COLDS BUT HAVE NO COVID SYMPTOMS

Attendance at the start of term has been good and it is great to see children and parents eager to return. As autumn approaches there are sure to be occasions when pupils will develop colds. If your child has a cold but none of the symptoms of coronavirus (high temperature, a new continuous cough, change in or loss of taste/smell) and are well enough to be in school then they should attend as normal.

If your child is not well enough to be in school for any reason then please make sure that you contact the school office to let us know. If we have no explanation for your child's absence we will ring you at home. It is important that you answer this call as we have a duty to account for pupils' whereabouts. If your child is not able to attend school for reasons other than illness then please speak with our office staff. We work hard to support all families to make sure that children are able to attend and are always here to help.

If a child, or member of their household, has symptoms of coronavirus you will need to arrange a test as soon as possible. Your child and all other household members should remain at home until you receive a test result.

You can read the guidance about how to get a test and what happens if your test is negative or positive here:

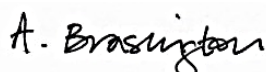
<https://gov.wales/apply-coronavirus-covid-19-test>

For contact tracing, it is important that you let school know if you receive a positive test result.

BREAKFAST CLUB

Breakfast club will restart on Monday 14th September. A meeting has been held today with the LA catering team and plans are being finalised. Details will be provided in a separate letter.

Kind regards,



Mr A Brasington