

*Please ask for:*

*Direct Line:*

*E-Mail:*

*Our Ref:*

*Your Ref:*

*Date:* 14 September 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

On Monday 13 September 2021, Dr Keith Reid, Executive Director of Public Health for the Swansea Bay region wrote to me to indicate that the Regional Incident Management Team (IMT) considers that the level of risk in Swansea Bay is currently equivalent to the “High” rating on our schools framework. This decision has been communicated to our schools and extra measures are now being put in place across all our schools.

If ever proof was needed, this shows that Covid has not gone away in our region or in Wales and levels of infection are now as high as last December. Schools are not themselves a high risk, but we are asking them to take steps to help prevent the continuing spread of the virus in the wider community.

Amongst the control measures that schools will be considering are:

- not holding large group gatherings such as assemblies (whole year groups in Comp/whole school in Primary)
- the use of one way systems within the school building
- consistent seating plans (recognising this may not be possible for younger learners)
- using outdoor spaces where possible
- floor signage
- Physical distancing and seating plans in place in classrooms. This may include forward facing desks depending on room capacity and risk assessment, recognising that this may not be possible with younger children or with learners that require one to one support.
- Twice weekly LFD testing available for staff and secondary learners to help identify and isolate asymptomatic cases as soon as possible.
- Face coverings should be worn by secondary aged learners when moving around indoor communal areas outside of the classroom. Face coverings continue to be needed on school transport.
- Face coverings should be worn by staff and visitors in schools when moving around indoor communal areas outside of the classroom, such as corridors, where physical distance cannot be maintained.

Any schools, based on their risk assessment, can put additional mitigation and control measures in place as they see fit and we ask that you support our headteachers and their staff with this.

Please remember that a Lateral Flow Test is not suitable for anyone showing symptoms. Anyone showing symptoms must book a PCR test and must isolate at home until the result of that test is known.

We are asking everyone in Swansea to continue to wash your hands regularly, to avoid heavily crowded places and remember that fresh air is important so if you are out socialising, meet outdoors if you can.

Vaccination is an extremely important protection against infection and drop-in vaccination sessions are running regularly in Swansea Bay for anyone over the age of 16.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Helen Morgan-Rees". The signature is written in a cursive style with a period at the end.

Helen Morgan-Rees  
Director of Education