



BISHOP VAUGHAN
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

8th January 2021

Dear Parents, Carers and Pupils,

As you will be aware, the First Minister announced this morning that schools in Wales will stay closed to most pupils until the February half term unless there is a "significant" fall in virus cases. The information was announced via the media early this morning and on the website of the Welsh Government. Further details can be found here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-55581949> and here: <https://gov.wales/first-minister-stay-home-save-lives>.

We have been advised that a letter for parents and carers will be forthcoming, and we will distribute that through the same channels as this letter. In the meantime, the purpose of this letter is to outline information and help provide clarity about the provision in the coming weeks. We have endeavoured to anticipate the questions that you may have at this time and to provide answers to these.

Will the school still be open for the children of critical workers?

Yes; details of the eligibility criteria can be found here, along with access to the booking form: <https://www.bishopvaughan.co.uk/childcare-booking-forms>

Is this the same as the summer lockdown, when schools were re-purposed as emergency childcare settings?

No; in this case lessons will continue throughout the lockdown period. Learning has been entirely moved to the remote learning arrangement, meaning that pupils will be accessing their learning provision for the whole of the period that the Welsh Government decides to keep schools closed to the majority of pupils in its efforts to control transmission of the virus.

How will teaching and learning take place in the coming weeks?

The current arrangements for remote teaching will continue. Our pupils are familiar with the routines for this, as all pupils received information about arrangements for learning in this way during last term, when we prepared them for the possibility of 'bubble closures' (of which there were subsequently several), and for the possibility of extended remote learning, as has been announced today.

- Provision will be via Microsoft Teams, the platform identified by Welsh Government and the Local Authority as being appropriate for this purpose.*
- Pupils who are unable to access Teams or who prefer to work via paper packs will be provided with these each week.*
- There will be a combination of teaching approaches in order to cater for pupils as effectively as possible, given the inevitable challenges of learning in this way. Please see the table overleaf for details.*

The Heads of Year also provided information on remote learning arrangements in this morning's assembly. These assemblies remain accessible on each year group's

Teams folder, should pupils or their parents/ carers wish to look at them again. Whilst we had only just learned, at that point, of the decision to extend remote learning beyond next Friday, Heads of Year were able to incorporate that information into the assembly in order to inform pupils and to answer their questions.

What can we do if we do not have access to digital devices suitable for learning, or to the internet?

Please contact the school if you are in this position. This can be done via MyEd, by emailing Student Services (ServicesS@hwbcymru.net) or telephone (01792 772006). We are working to help families with obstacles to online learning and hope that it will soon be the case that the only pupils working via paper packs are those that have chosen to do this as a matter of preference, rather than because they have no other option.

Will the assessments that Qualifications Wales have planned for pupils in Years 11-13 still take place?

Qualifications Wales stated this morning:

“We can confirm that there will be **no GCSE and AS/A level assessment window between February 22nd - April 23rd.**

The Welsh Government’s Design and Delivery Advisory Group will now consider the implications of the announcement on its proposals for assessments in 2021. In the meantime, it’s important that learners in Wales taking their qualifications this summer continue to engage fully in their studies.”

At present, we take this to mean that there is still a possibility of assessments taking place in the summer months, but that none will take place this term and that the focus should be on continuity of learning.

As you can see, the situation continues to change rapidly. While the possibility of cancellation of the planned return to school on Monday 18th January always remained high, it has only been confirmed this morning and therefore we are working to respond to changes as quickly and effectively as possible.

Given the news that remote learning is likely to continue until February half-term, a number of further initiatives that we have prepared in case of extended remote learning periods will now be put into practice and you will receive an update on these shortly.

With thanks for your understanding and patience in this fluid and constantly-changing situation, and with every good wish to you and your family for your continuing good health –

Yours faithfully,



**Mrs. E. Pole
Headteacher**

Remote Teaching and Learning Arrangements

All lessons are currently being delivered via Teams through a combination of 'live lessons', pre-recorded lessons and assignments which will follow your normal school timetable. It is expected that you make every effort to complete the work set and attend live sessions where possible.

If for any reason you can't attend lessons or are having difficulty in completing your work please let your teachers know via Teams or email and they will be able to offer you help and support.

We know that many of you are sharing devices with other people in the home and therefore you might not be able to attend every lesson.

Digital Devices and Internet Connectivity

If you are struggling to access devices because of family sharing or other issues, please contact the school; we will try to help in every way that we can. See the further information below.

Paper Resources

For those unable to access online learning and for any pupils who prefer to work using paper-based resources, paper packs are sent to your home.

Those pupils who have already informed the school that they don't have access to ICT equipment at home have had paper packs for next week sent to their homes. If your situation has changed and you now have access to ICT that you didn't have last term, please ask your parents to email the school to inform us that you no longer need paper packs.

Remember you can access Teams via Hwb on most internet enabled devices, including mobile phones, iPads, tablets, Xbox and PlayStation. Our Twitter feed shows you ways that you can do this.

If you don't have any ICT access, you can contact the school to request to borrow a laptop, and if you need to access online learning via an Xbox or a PlayStation you can borrow a keyboard from the school which you can attach to these consoles. Priority will be given to those that have no access to devices at all.

Feedback

Your teachers will mark and provide feedback on work that is submitted. If you aren't completing work or engaging with remote learning your teachers will inform parents via MyEd, text message and phone calls.

If you are completing work on paper, you can drop it into school for staff to pick up and mark (please be aware this could take a longer time as staff are working remotely and, in addition, paper-based work has to be 'quarantined'; for a faster process, you can take a photo and send the work to your teacher via email or Teams if you have online access but have worked on paper through choice).

Planning Your Day

We advise that you follow your timetable each day. This enables you to manage your workload effectively, balance the demands of each subject and to take regular breaks.

We know that many pupils prefer to cover a series of lessons at once, for example to focus on work for 2-3 English lessons one day and to cover other subjects on other days. This is perfectly fine for recorded lessons and assignments, as it is important to find the system that works best for you, however please check your Teams page for the 'live lesson' invitations to make sure that you don't miss those.

Live Lessons and Assignment Details

Please check your Teams calendar and assignments daily to make sure that you know in advance of any lessons for which you need to be online at a specific time, and to check when you have deadlines.

Engaging in Live Lessons

- Prepare for the session in plenty of time and ensure you join ON TIME
- Access the relevant files for each lesson in advance and have the materials to hand
- Ensure your device is powered from the mains, that it has a good internet connection and that you are not too far away from the Wi-Fi router
- Choose an appropriate workspace where other family members will not be walking around and disturbing you and explain to your family you are starting a lesson
- Minimise distractions. Turn off music, tv, phone etc. in the background.
- Ensure your camera and microphone are turned OFF and use the chat to engage with the lesson
- Try and answer questions when the teacher allows you to (you can unmute your microphone when teacher encourages you to). It is an INTERACTIVE lesson.
- Show respect for everyone in the online classroom
- Positively contribute to the class; do not be disruptive at any time. Any comments or questions should be related to the topic being discussed. Any inappropriate comments will be removed and will result in you being removed from the lesson and your parents being informed
- Behaviour in an online lesson should be as expected in any lessons and any disruption will be dealt with by the schools' behaviour policy.
- If you disconnect from the call for any reason such as internet or power issues, don't panic: reset and join again
- Do not make recordings/images of the class or the teacher
- Do not try to initiate any live sessions without a teacher present
- Only pupils in the class will be allowed to attend the lessons. Anyone that attempts to join as a 'guest' will not be allowed to participate in the lesson. Pupils who share the hyperlink to the lesson with others will be dealt with under the school's discipline for learning policy and could potentially be removed from online learning for an extended period of time. Remember that anything you do on Teams is logged and can be accessed by school staff.

Wellbeing Checks

Weekly check-ins with tutors take place via tutorial sessions. You can also contact your tutor throughout the week via Teams or email.

Regular phone calls also take place for pupils with additional learning needs, or those who have requested wellbeing support. If you feel you would like a weekly phone call from a member of staff to support you, please email your tutor, Head of Year or Mr Walker.

Services, such as Exchange counselling are available online or over the phone. A long list of support services and activities to support wellbeing are available via the Pupil Wellbeing Team.

Recap on Lesson Types

Recorded Lessons	'Live'/ Interactive Lessons	Assignments
<p>These are also called 'asynchronous' lessons, and you can access these at any time. We know that these are particularly helpful:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if you can't always access the computer at a specific time, or need to share use of it with other family members • where you want to work at your own pace throughout the lesson, pausing and repeating as needed • where it would be useful to re-visit lessons and topics later on, for revision or consolidation of your knowledge and skills; you can do this as many times as you want <p>Wherever possible, we will try to offer you this type of lesson.</p>	<p>For these lessons, you will need to be online at a specific time with your teacher or tutor and your class. These types of lessons are called 'synchronous' lessons, because they take place at a specific time and cannot be accessed outside this time. It will be very important that your parent/ carer has given consent for you to take part in these lessons and that you follow the guidance above. If your parents had previously withheld consent but now</p>	<p>Lesson resources, such as PowerPoints, booklets and worksheets on Teams or in your paper packs</p>

	are allowing you to take part, please ask your parents to message the school via MyEd so that your teachers can add you to the Teams groups.	
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The teacher support and messaging currently provided on Teams will continue, and you can ask for help whenever needed with recorded or livestreamed lessons, as well as with assignments.