

Dear Parent/Carers,

The Easter break is now well and truly over and I just wanted to say a big hello to everyone in the CCYD community and pass on our congratulations to all of you who are key-workers. Staff at CCYD have been working alongside primary colleagues at the Brynmenyn Hub to ensure that support and childcare is offered to the children of key-workers. This shows the commitment of our community because this is done on a purely voluntary basis.

Remote/Distance Learning

This is new territory for everyone and I know there have been lots of concerns over this. The majority of classes are now on google classroom and we have sent out timetables for Years 7-10. Staff are now setting work via a fortnightly timetable and this seems a more manageable system. I would like to pass on my best wishes to those learners who are beginning to receive congratulatory postcards for their efforts and hard work. Also, to those who are taking part in the daily challenge from the PE department; we know how important physical activity is for our well-being. Remember all of this work is also available on our Learning at Home section on our website.

I know some of you feel that you cannot offer your child/children the support they need with regards to learning, and you may feel that they are missing out. Along with this, some of you are working from home and are no doubt finding balancing this with home-schooling difficult. All we can ask is that you encourage them to do the work set and remember they can ask staff for help via google classroom or email. One of the other important things you can do is to encourage them to read.

We are now encouraging those Year 11 learners who would like to return to pursue their education in the sixth form to start their A level courses. This is difficult without live/real lessons but it will give them the opportunity to see what their courses are like and encourage independent learning which is very necessary for sixth form study. Year 9 learners are now also having the opportunity to continue with the core subjects but also to make a start with their option subjects.

We are discussing and prioritising education and learning for current Year 10 and Year 12 learners and we are waiting for more guidance from WJEC. We do not want these learners to stress because the gap in learning will be considered by the examination board and they will not have to cover the amount of content usually expected. Once we get further clarification on this I will ensure that you are told asap. We are also in the process of prioritising a Chromebook loan scheme for those who cannot access a computer along with access to the internet. This is being looked at by the Welsh Government and BCBC and further details will follow.

School Opening

I can reassure you that we will let you know when this is likely to happen. There is a constant flow of information about this on a daily basis from the Welsh and UK Government. I want to assure you that we will only open CCYD when it is safe to do so. It does seem that the way we used to operate with all Year Groups in at the same time is not likely to happen in the near future due to social distancing regulations. So, school life is going to be different and it is going to take a lot of new thinking and strategic planning. The Education Minister, Kirsty Williams, has now set out five guiding principles which will determine when and how schools will return. The first of these is to ensure the safety and mental, emotional and physical wellbeing of learners and staff. This will be at the forefront of all of our planning.

I would like to assure you that lots of virtual meetings are happening and we are busy planning for the immediate and long-term future. We know that there are going to be significant gaps in learning and this will vary from learner to learner. We will look at ways to address this but our immediate priority is to look after the emotional wellbeing of our learners' in the first instance. Once we do this formal learning and bridging those gaps will naturally follow.

Examinations: Teacher Assessments and Professional Judgements

Our teachers are busy following a rigorous and robust internal process for awarding grades for all learners who ordinarily would have formal GCSE and A Level examinations in line with Welsh Government and Qualifications Wales requirements. This involves the following:

Teacher assessed grades will be based on what teachers would expect a learner to achieve at the end of the course. They need to represent a fair, reasonable and carefully considered judgement of the most likely grade that might be achieved in normal circumstances. This is a professional judgement based on the combined assessment information held for that learner and will be a holistic judgement rather than focusing on a single source of evidence like mock examinations.

Can I respectfully remind parents/carers that your views and judgments cannot and will not be considered as part of this process and any communication to staff in relation to your child's grades, will not receive a response. The examination boards will retain the right to scale grades if they feel a school has been too generous and therefore, the final outcomes may change according to the boundaries set by the examination boards. **No learner or parents will be able to have any information regarding the grades awarded by teachers until the formal results day in August. This is consistent with all learners across Wales.**

The outcomes of learners' performance will be made available on the planned days in August:

- **August 13th for A Level results**
- **August 20th for GCSE results.**

Again, this will not be in the same format as previous years. We are not sure if we will be open yet and it could likely be in electronic and/or via postal methods. If we cannot open, we will have methods in place for learners to seek the various advice they need. However, in the current climate we cannot yet make this decision.

School Timetable and Calendar for 2020/21

Senior staff are busy planning the timetable for September and there are certain difficulties which will be communicated with learners such as subjects which are undersubscribed and/or have clashes and will not be viable to run. These details will follow separately to groups of learners.

We will also be conducting virtual interviews for new staff over the next few weeks.

Wellbeing of Learners

The wellbeing of all our learners is our biggest priority at the moment. We are aware that these are very challenging and difficult times.

Pastoral staff have already contacted many learners and it is our intention to ensure that this continues. Any learner or parent can contact us via comment@ccyd.org.uk. This email account is monitored daily by a senior member of staff and Mrs C Pope will respond accordingly and as soon as possible to any query sent to us.

I hope this helps alleviate some of your concerns. All we can do is ensure we are strategic and ready for when CCYD does reopen, and that we are mindful of Public Health regulations around this. In the meantime, I would like to send my best wishes to you all and I hope you and your families stay safe and well.

Regards,

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