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Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol
MERTHYR TUDFUL
MERTHYR TYDFIL
County Borough Council

Dyddiad/Date: 3rd March 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

It is nearly a year since my first letter to you on 17th March 2020 to let you know about the first lockdown for schools. Hopefully, this letter, on the back of this morning's announcement from the Education Minister, signals the start of the return to normality for our children who have been subject to so much disruption over the past 12 months. **Please note any arrangements are subject to the continuing reduction in numbers of coronavirus cases.** So, it is vitally important that everyone continues to socially distance and not allow children to mix with other families or households outside school.

Across the secondary schools in Merthyr Tydfil **all Yr 11** pupils will return to face-to-face learning for the last two weeks of the Spring Term, which ends on Friday 26th March. Actual timings of the school day will be confirmed by your child's school as soon as possible.

Yr 11 pupils will also be offered the opportunity to undertake twice weekly Lateral Flow Tests. The first of these will be taken in school on 15th March and a consent form will be sent out for this. The subsequent tests will be taken at home and your child will be given instructions on this. It is likely these tests will continue in the Summer Term.

For Yr 10 learners who are entered for GCSEs this summer, there will also be the opportunity for those to return for face-to-face sessions at some point during the last two weeks of Spring Term. Each school will be in touch with the relevant learners in Yr 10 to explain when they are to return. Yr 10 learners will also be offered a Lateral Flow Test in a similar way to Yr 11s.

There will be no school catering during these two weeks and learners will need to bring a packed lunch if needed. Learners will be expected to wear school uniform.

Pupils in **Yrs 7, 8 & 9** and those in Yr 10 who are not entered for external examinations will be offered the opportunity for a wellbeing catch-up session at some point during the two weeks. Further details will be provided by schools as soon as possible. Remote learning will continue for learners during these two weeks but there will be no live lessons.

Hub provision will be continue to be provided for learners in Yrs 7,8 & 9 during the two weeks although to avoid unnecessary missing of bubbles, there will not be the opportunity to attend both the Hub and wellbeing sessions the same day.

Arrangements for the Summer Term, which starts on Monday 12th April will be confirmed as soon as possible.

Please remember that the wearing of face masks remains compulsory for all pupils and staff at all times in any secondary school building. Please ensure that your child has at least two masks for each day. This does not apply in situations where wearing a face covering would impact on the ability to take part in exercise or strenuous activity, for example PE lessons. I am aware that some pupils are exempt from wearing a face mask; if you believe this to be the case, please ensure the school is aware.

A reminder as well that from March 1st smoking is not allowed on school grounds. Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

SUE WALKER, CHIEF OFFICER (LEARNING)