

8th January 2021

Update from the Headteacher

Dear Parent/Carer,

I have just received a letter from the Education Minister, Kirsty Williams confirming arrangements for schools up to Friday 29th January. Please find below a summary of the key information from this correspondence:

- *'The First Minister will confirm today that we will bring the decision-making on schools and colleges into line with the Welsh Government's three-week review timetable of **29 January**. This means that students will continue to learn remotely until then.*
- *At that point, **unless the rates of community transmission in Wales reduce significantly by 29 January, most students in schools and colleges will continue working remotely until the February half term.***
- *We are taking this action because the new variant is far more infectious and is leading to increased numbers of people falling ill and being hospitalised. Colleagues will know that the new variant does not mean schools have suddenly become unsafe. They do not pose an increased risk to teachers or students. However, keeping schools open does encourage children and adults to mix – inside and outside the school gates – at a time when cases of coronavirus are high in the community and we have a very infectious strain spreading quickly.*
- ***Qualifications Wales have also announced the cancellation of the spring internal assessment window (due between 22 February and 23 April) for GCSE, AS and A levels. Revised assessment arrangements for the award of these qualifications in summer 2021 will be put in place shortly.'***

Please be reassured that **our pupils will therefore continue with their full timetables through blended learning provision up to the 29th January at the very earliest**; it has been very pleasing to see such high levels of engagement in this provision from pupils across all key stages and we continue to receive very positive feedback from pupils and parents on the quality of lessons. The school will continue to update you on revisions to this provision to further support the wellbeing of your child through additional contact with their form tutor in the coming weeks.

For those parents/carers of pupils in examination years, you will know that we had started to process information from Qualifications Wales sent to us on the 18th December and were beginning to make necessary plans for internal assessments later in the Spring term; you will note that these **'internal assessments' have now been cancelled**. We hope to be updated on the 'revised assessment arrangements for the

award of these qualifications in summer 2021' to which the Education Minister refers shortly and we will of course be in touch with any information when we are told.

In the meantime, can I once again take this opportunity to thank you for your part in making the blended learning provision work and also show my appreciation to the fabulous team of teachers and learning support assistants who are working very hard to provide the best possible provision for our young people. I feel very fortunate to lead such a proactive, committed and enthusiastic team.

Please continue to take good care of yourselves.

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Victoria Lambe
Headteacher

