



23rd October 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

The New Normal

As we break for half term and enter a national lockdown, I would like to share our experiences of the new normal at Ysgol Rhosnesni. I must also respectfully request your support and understanding in relation to a number of our operational priorities.

It has been an extremely challenging few weeks, but colleagues and students have coped admirably. Our entire community is now actively engaging with the Test, Trace and Protect (TTP) strategy. All Wrexham schools have experienced significant disruption to learning and are implementing COVID-19 self-isolation protocols. Until a week ago, we had not been required to ask a contact group to work from home. When one considers the size of our school, this was a significant achievement. It is likely that we will see further disruption to learning throughout the winter, should infection rates continue to rise in our region. Rest assured, I will always act cautiously and put our community's safety first. Equally, we will always do our utmost to provide continuity of education for your child.

Teaching and Learning

Balancing and minimising any risks from COVID-19 with providing a full educational experience for children is proving to be exceptionally difficult. Whilst we must continue to use stringent control measures, we are trying to deliver a stimulating, broad and balanced curriculum. My colleagues are doing their very best, despite many constraints. I ask that you support, assist and appreciate them. Criticising and undermining my colleagues – in situations over which they have little control – is both counterproductive and demoralising. Thankfully, we have hundreds of supportive and aspirational parents at Rhosnesni. It is to this significant majority that I am both grateful and indebted.

November Firebreak

With the First Minister's recent announcement that only Year 7 and Year 8 will be permitted to return on Monday 2nd November, it is particularly important that all parents consolidate our work around Google Classroom, Mathswatch and revision. In addition to monitoring the specific work my colleagues will set for Years 9, 10 and 11, I ask you to consider how easy it now is for students with connected devices to learn independently. For example, a free and reputable resource such as GCSE Bitesize is incredibly useful and simple to use. Children can sometimes become reluctant learners when away from the school setting, but there really is no excuse for not studying at home.

Arrival and Departure

For the foreseeable future, arrival and departure will continue via the Borrass Road and Holt Road gates only. Our internal gates do not open until 8.40am, with students expected to be in their classrooms and learning at 9.00am. Students will continue to leave the site from these gates (Borrass and Holt), with Years 10 and 11 departing at 2.50pm. Years 8 and 9 will now be dismissed from these gates at 2.55pm. Year 7 will continue to leave at 3.00pm.

RESPECT HONESTY SUCCESS
PARCH GONESTRWYDD A LLWYDDIANT

Whether the beginning or the end of the school day, please do not park, drop-off, collect or convene near to the school's entrances. Similarly, please do not block residents' driveways or be inconsiderate. As I have previously requested, I would be extremely grateful if parents in cars could arrange to collect children from an agreed rendezvous point a short walking distance from the school.

Face-to-Face Meetings

Other than in emergency situations, physical meetings with parents will remain suspended in the interests of safety. Our main reception area is currently closed to all parents, carers and relatives. Adults, other than colleagues, should not enter the school grounds without permission. Please ring the school number if you have any concerns or queries. Members of our pastoral, safeguarding and ALN teams will contact you at the earliest opportunity.

Face Masks

All Wrexham secondary school students are required to bring facemasks for use in corridors and communal indoor areas. Please ensure that your child has a suitable face covering with a small plastic bag for hygienic storage.

Recreation Zones

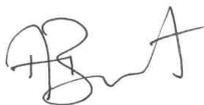
The strong advice of Public Health Wales is that we continue with year/contact group outdoor recreation zones. Undoubtedly, fresh air and exercise are important for health and well-being. Please ensure that your child has a warm coat for breaks and lunch. All students will continue to be limited to a grab and go canteen service. We will continue to use wet weather protocols when we experience persistent and/or torrential downpours.

Covid-19 Control Measures and Risk Assessments

I am being frequently reminded by health officials that, whilst there is a need for face coverings in some situations, there is no substitute for rigorous hygiene combined with social distancing. Please continue to reinforce the important messages we have previously communicated about hand washing and respiratory hygiene. Similarly, please follow the now established processes should you have any concerns about COVID-19 symptoms or receive a positive test result.

Finally, I would like to wish you and your family a restful and safe half term break. These are unprecedented and challenging times, but we can get through this safely together.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Brant', written in a cursive style.

Mr A Brant
Headteacher