



25<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Dear Parent / Carer,

We welcome the Welsh Assembly Government announcement that all students should return to school full time from September 2020, and we cannot begin to tell you how much we are looking forward to having our student population back on the premises. As you are doubtless aware, secondary schools in Wales have been asked to maintain year group bubbles while students are in school. Therefore our planning is predicated upon the fact that students can have contact with those who are in the same year group only (with Sixth Form students being regarded as one bubble). For a number of weeks now we have been putting plans in place and determining how to translate our theory into practice. An overview of the great detail which underpins this operation is available in our Risk Assessment for all to view on the school website. Tweaks to our standard school day practices have been necessary, and we are pleased to be able to share our plans for the Autumn term with you below. Our plans are based upon government guidance, and interpreted in order to mitigate against risk in all reasonable ways possible. Should you wish to read the full guidance currently available, the two master documents can be found here:

<https://gov.wales/operational-guidance-schools-and-settings-autumn-term-covid-19>

<https://gov.wales/guidance-learning-schools-and-settings-autumn-term-covid-19>

## Dates

As per our last letter, we intend to begin the Autumn term as follows:-

**Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> and Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September** – Staff planning and preparation days

**Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September** – Students in Year 13 may enrol (if not already done)

**Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September** – Year 7 induction and Year 12 final enrolment, induction and start of lessons

**Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September** – Year 7 induction and start of lessons, Year 12 lessons continue

**Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September** – all students return to school in all year groups. Induction sessions during morning.

The school website now shows the planned calendar of events for the next academic year. However, it is currently important to remember that even planned and scheduled events could unfortunately be subject to change at extremely short notice.

## **Behaviour Policy**

As always, we expect students to adhere appropriately to the school's Behaviour Policy at all times. Any student who cannot meet our expectations, including all additional COVID-19 measures, may be sanctioned by the Headteacher using the full range of sanctions available, including exclusions. We may be unable to 'internally isolate' students who are poorly behaved and so these students may well receive fixed term exclusions. For the safety of all we may need to contact parents / carers at short notice, so please ensure we hold your very latest contact details in school. Please email Mrs Carol Jones on [carol.jones@castellalun.flintshire.sch.uk](mailto:carol.jones@castellalun.flintshire.sch.uk) if you think we may hold outdated information. Our reviewed Home School Agreement will again be shared with all families at the start of term.

## **Uniform / P.E. Kit**

Students should wear their full uniform for school. We need to maintain the integrity of the year group bubbles and therefore need to be certain that students are in the right area for their year group – particularly at lunch and break times. Students will be encouraged to spend leisure time outside and so a suitable coat is essential.

We hope to be able to run basic P.E. lessons, with an emphasis on appropriate non-contact outdoor exercise. Changing rooms will be wiped after each use. Students will require their school P.E. kit on scheduled days. It is hoped that we will soon be able to return to more normal practice. All students will receive an in depth induction to clarify any issues, including the above, in their initial tutor periods.

## **Break/Lunch**

We will have both a staggered break and lunch each day. We will explain this in detail to all students during their induction session upon their return to school.

In effect, our standard period 2 will be lengthened to incorporate break, and each year group will be allocated a 15 minute slot within this period for their break. At these times students will be able to use the toilets and go to an outside zoned area or a designated indoor space (should the weather be poor), which will enable us to keep year groups apart.

Lunch break will last 30 minutes per year group, staggered during an extended (90 minutes) period 4, and all year groups will have allocated times during their lunch break when they may use the school canteen if necessary. *Where possible students should bring packed lunches and eat these in the designated outdoor zoned area (or indoor designated space if the weather is poor) for each year group.* A 'grab and go' ready-made packed lunch or hot food option will be available from the canteen as necessary, but the choice of foods is likely to be extremely limited for a period of time.

All parents / carers who need to purchase food from school will be required to do this using either the School Gateway App, or paying a cheque into the paying-in box provided. Year 7 students will have received further information on how to access the School Gateway via a recent email. If you

are a Year 7 parent / carer and have not received this please contact the school. All Year 7 students will be able to purchase food, if absolutely necessary, from Thursday 3rd September and our new intake students will be given access to the system through their induction session on their first morning in school. *We do, however, strongly recommend that students in all year groups bring a packed lunch, where possible, for the immediate future.*

### **Transport**

Where possible, families should bring children to the general school area in private cars and drop them off where it is safe and appropriate to do so nearby. The school car park could well become inordinately busy and queues will be large should parents / carers all find it necessary to drive into this area. Staff will be present in the car park to direct students as necessary.

If you have no choice but to use the school buses, then it will be essential that all students follow the latest rules on public transport accordingly. A member of staff will tell students when they may get on / off the school buses on the premises and where to go. At present Flintshire County Council guidance states that there is no need to socially distance or use face masks on school transport, but this may change.

Ideally, students should walk to school when it is safe and appropriate to do so.

For students who have to use the train, Mr Kevin Davies (Asst. Head) will provide a pass which will be shown to the teacher in order to leave the classroom at the appropriate time at the end of the day.

### **Symptoms and Illness**

In addition to the Risk Assessment already mentioned and the organisational changes outlined above, *it is absolutely essential that no student who is showing any sign of any illness whatsoever is sent to school.* Student Development Managers and other staff will verbally and visually check this as students arrive at school.

If a student shows symptoms when at school then they will be isolated as soon as possible by staff wearing full PPE, parents / carers called. Families should then follow the Test, Track and Protect protocol, isolate for 10 days (or until it is clear that the virus is not being carried) and keep the school informed of all developments. All household members should then also remain at home for 14 days.

### **Arrival / Departure / Movement Around School / Toilets**

All students will enter the school through year group designated entrance points only. These are as follows:

Year 7 – Gym, through double white doors 8.40am

Year 8 - Bike sheds by G6 8.40am

Year 9 - G4 8.40am

Year 10 - Sportshall side door near astroturf 8.50am

Year 11 - G1 8.50am

Years 12&13 - Sixth Form entrance 8.50am

However, if a student is late to school, he / she should then enter through the main school entrance to sign in.

Students will be released from lessons in a staggered manner using a scheduled 3 minute lesson - turnaround and a strict one-way system will be in place for everyone in the school building at all times. Teaching staff will generally remain in their classrooms, with classes in their year group bubbles attending different rooms for many of their lessons, having followed the strict one way system. This is to allow specialist teaching areas to be used for KS4&5 examination classes and to avoid students remaining unsupervised in classrooms during lesson changeover, which would present a health and safety risk itself. At the time of writing there is no requirement for students to wear face masks on the corridors, but this could change.

We will release students in year groups at the end of the day, again in a staggered manner. Parents / carers will be able to use the limited number of parking spaces in the school car parks at this time of day, but again, this area will be very busy and parents / carers may well choose to avoid this option and wait in cars away from the school site.

All year groups will have designated toilets to use, and these will, of course, be cleaned regularly by our enhanced cleaning staff team.

### **Lessons and Curriculum**

We will encourage all students to submit work for assessment and feedback online through Google Classroom, perhaps taking a clear photo of hand-written work as necessary. If hard copies of work are submitted, these will not be touched by staff for 48 hours (before and after marking), unless gloves are used. If students do not have access to appropriate technology outside school parents / carers should refer this matter to Mr Carl Pugh (Acting Deputy Head).

In order to mitigate against risk as far as is reasonably possible, our standard curriculum offer is generally still in place but has been altered appropriately. In certain subjects there is perhaps an increased risk of virus transmission. These subjects include Art, DT, Music, Science and PE. For example, we envisage at present that large group ensemble work will not be able to take place in Music, contact sport will be avoided in PE and research / design work will take priority in Art / DT, with practical activities not being currently possible in Science either. This situation will be under regular review of course.

Hand sanitiser will be used in each classroom and further hand sanitising stations will be located around the site. Students will be asked to sanitise their hands every time they enter and leave a

classroom, and will assist teaching staff in wiping their desks on a regular basis in order that high-touch classroom surfaces will be cleaned between lessons.

Should it be the case that we have a partial or full closure of the school, we will continue the curriculum remotely. We would communicate any such closure to you as soon as we are able, and use the school email, website and social media systems to do so. We have refined our use of online lessons through Google Classroom and would utilise this platform to support students' remote learning should this be necessary. Homework tasks will most likely be set through Google Classroom from now onwards, even when the school is in normal session.

### **Wrap Around Care**

A limited number of places will be made available for reduced wrap-around care after school, and restricted to pre-bookings only. This provision will not be available before school and only be available until 4.30pm, although we will keep this under review. Please contact school in order to book a space at your earliest convenience.

### **New Build**

Our planned new build has been phased to ensure that we have the available space both within and outside our school buildings in order to be able to mitigate against the potential spread of illness as far as we reasonably are able. Enabling works for the new build have recently begun, and we currently await further clarification of specific dates, but will keep you informed of developments in the weekly Blog.

We hope that this information provides you with the reassurances you need and that the arrangements we have put in place will mean that students and staff will be as safe as possible. We have been mindful not to send out lots of information over the summer holiday, and indeed until national guidance about the September start to term has been updated.

The first weeks of term will be a challenge for us all but we are confident that we will soon get into a routine which will enable our students to enjoy their learning, following what has been a most significant disruption to their normal practice.

Best wishes and thanks for your ongoing support.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Edwards', with a large, stylized flourish above the name.

Paul Edwards (Acting Head)