



Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhondda

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16 July 2020

Dear Parents / Guardians,

At the end of a very unusual and unique school year I would like to sincerely thank you as families once again for your support for your children and for us as a school community.

This year has been a difficult and challenging year for the inhabitants of the Rhondda. Floods brought difficulty and hardship at the beginning of the year, and shortly following that, Covid-19 came to hit us. If that wasn't enough, a second bout of flooding hit some residents. However, true to form, we succeeded in working together as a community in order to overcome obstacles and ensure the best for our young people. Thank you all for playing your part in ensuring that success.

Bidding farewell to Year 11 and 13 pupils.

Unfortunately, we lost the opportunity to formally bid farewell to pupils who are leaving us. This was an unexpected end to their school career and we are aware how disappointing this was for pupils and staff alike. As soon as we can engage in a social event, we shall invite those pupils and parents back to school for a farewell ceremony. In the meantime, a genuine thanks to all the pupils for their contributions during their time in school and we wish them well for the future. The doors of Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhondda will always be open to them and to you as parents, and we hope you will keep in touch with us as a school. We shall follow our pupils' successes as they move on to the next step on their pathway.

Re - opening school 29th June.

Many pupils have attended school since 29th June, and, despite the necessary restrictions adopted by us, we succeeded in preparing the pupils for the next phase in their learning. It was so lovely to see our pupils. They deserve to be congratulated for their positive attitudes and resilience as they returned to such a different environment.

Some pupils worked from home during the re - opening of school, and we'd like to thank you as parents for ensuring pupils committed to learning from afar. We are proud of how our pupils have adapted to the new challenges of distance learning during lockdown and since then.

School closes this year on 17th July and we do not expect pupils to engage in school work during the summer holidays. Staff won't be updating work on Google Classrooms during this period and we don't expect them to provide feedback either.

It's extremely important that pupils and staff have an opportunity to recharge energy during the holidays in order to face the new challenges in September. However, if pupils wish to fulfil some tasks in order to re-enforce their learning, there are enough resources on Google Classrooms. Please remember that there is a vast provision of wellbeing resources on our school website, and our Wellbeing Twitter account. It's important that pupils take advantage of these resources in order to ensure a healthy balance in their everyday life.

Results Day 2020.

School will be open for results this year. Results will be available **August 13 for A / AS level** and **August 20 for GCSE.**

Results celebration days are extremely important days in our school calendar and we take pride in coming together as a school community to celebrate with our pupils and their families.

Unfortunately, this year, circumstances will be different. Due to social distancing rules, we will not be able to permit pupils and their families to join us in the usual way. In order to manage numbers on the school site, we kindly ask parents **NOT** to come to collect results with your children. We will provide parking arrangements for you.

We will be operating a rota system for pupils to collect their results, and **we kindly ask everyone to adhere to these arrangements.** A timetable will be sent to you as parents to share with your child the week beginning **August 3rd.**

We shall also inform you of our parking arrangements, and Health and Safety arrangements for your child as they move around the school site.

This has been a very difficult decision for us as a school, and we hope you understand and support us in our decision to prioritise Health and Safety in preparing for these days.

School Reports to Parents 2020.

Every pupil will receive a report by mail at the end of the academic year. The report this year will mainly be based on the Form Tutor's comments and will concentrate on the pupil's personal qualities and their general skills.

The new academic year – September 2020

Following the Education Minister's announcement regarding the new academic year, we have informed you of our arrangements and aim to introduce every pupil to school by September 14th.

Wythnos 1 / Week 1		
Dydd Llun / Monday	31/08/20	Gwyliau Haf / Summer Holidays
Dydd Mawrth / Tuesday	01/09/20	Diwrnod Cynllun Adfer COVID-19 Recovery & Planning Day
Dydd Mercher / Wednesday	02/09/20	Diwrnod Cynllun Adfer COVID-19 Recovery & Planning Day
Dydd Iau / Thursday	03/09/20	Blynyddoedd / Years 7,12
Dydd Gwener / Friday	04/09/20	Blynyddoedd / Years 7,11,12,13

Wythnos 2 / Week 2		
Dydd Llun / Monday	07/09/20	Blynyddoedd / Years 7,11,12,13 + Blwyddyn 9 / Year 9
Dydd Mawrth / Tuesday	08/09/20	Blynyddoedd / Years 7,9,11,12,13
Dydd Mercher / Wednesday	09/09/20	Blynyddoedd / Years 7,9,11,12,13 + Blwyddyn 10 / Year 10
Dydd Iau / Thursday	10/09/20	Blynyddoedd / Years 7,9,10,11,12,13 + Blwyddyn 8 / Year 8 (Pob blwyddyn ysgol / Every year group)
Dydd Gwener / Friday	11/09/20	Pob blwyddyn ysgol / Every year group

I'm sure you appreciate that this is an ever-changing situation, and we might have to adapt these arrangements depending on the Education Minister's advice at the end of August.

Although every pupil will return to school by September 14th, normality will not return to conditions as they were before the pandemic. However, our principle remains to do our very best for your child in all aspects of their school life. Our care, support, and motivation will be of the highest standard and we will do all we can to promote the wellbeing of every child, hand in hand with supporting their needs as learners.

Your child's timetable will be adapted and we will be ensuring the same provision in a different way. As a result of having to adapt our buildings in order to ensure Health and Safety regulations, and based on advice to keep pupils in contact groups, designated groups will be educated in designated areas for the first half term. Our letter in August will set out all these arrangements for you and will outline our full provision.

Attendance.

It is expected for all pupils to attend school in September unless they have a medical reason not to attend.

Transport

Here are the transport arrangements for the start and end of the school day, for the first fortnight at least, from September:

Morning Arrangements:

Buses arrive at school	8.20 – 8.40am
Cars arrive at school	8.45 – 9.00am
Pupils walking arrive at school	9.00am

Afternoon Arrangements:

Buses leave school site	2.00pm
Cars arrive to collect children	2.15pm
Pupils walking arrive at school	2.00pm

During the first half term, if you are able to, we kindly ask you to make alternative arrangements, and that your child travels on the school bus **as a last resort**. We ask this as a way of managing numbers travelling on the school bus.

Face coverings.

Our understanding at present is that pupils will be expected to wear a face covering whilst they are travelling on the school bus from September. We are awaiting more information regarding this and will be able to update you in August

School Meals.

In order to reduce contact between contact groups, we ask you to provide your child with a packed lunch for the first fortnight in September. **Pupils will not be allowed to leave the school premises to buy food.**

A packed lunch will be available for those eligible for free school meals.

Our food arrangements will be reviewed at the beginning of the school year.

As a result of health regulations, our school will not be able to handle cash at all, and we therefore ask you to use the Local Authority's online system. Please ensure you are registered to use the system by using the following link:

<https://www.civicaepay.co.uk/RhonddaEstore/estore/default/Account/Login?ReturnUrl=%2FRhonddaEstore%2Festore%2Fdefault%2FHome%2FIndex>

We will be ensuring Year 7 will be introduced and receive training regarding our cashless system in September.

School Uniform Grants

I would also like to remind you of the school uniform grants, available to some pupils starting in Years 7 and 10 in September. Please see the link below for further details.

<https://gov.wales/pupil-development-grant-access>

Inset Days 2020-2021

I would also like to take this opportunity to share with you our provisional dates for this year's INSET days:

Mawrth / Tuesday	1/9/2020	Diwrnod Cynllun Adfer COVID-19 COVID-19 Recovery & Planning Day
Mercher / Wednesday	2/9/2020	Diwrnod Cynllun Adfer COVID-19 COVID-19 Recovery & Planning Day
Gwener / Friday	6/11/2020	HMS / INSET 1
Gwener / Friday	4/12/2020	HMS / INSET 2
Llun / Monday	4/1/2021	HMS / INSET 3
Mercher / Wednesday	16/6/ 2021	HMS / INSET 4
Llun / Monday	19/7/2021	HMS / INSET 5
Mawrth / Tuesday	20/7/2021	HMS / INSET 6

We have provided you with the current information we hold at present. Should this change, we will inform you immediately.

We will face the social and educational challenges ahead together as one team in Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhondda, as we usually do.

Thank you for your patience and continued support during this extraordinary period.

Every best wish for the summer holidays. Take great care.

We look forward to welcoming our pupils back to school in September - we have missed them greatly.
We also look forward to welcoming our new Year 7 pupils to the family.

Sincerely,

Sara Elise Jones

(Acting Head)