



**NEWBRIDGE**  
SCHOOL

HEADTEACHER  
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9<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

### Reopening of School – 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021

The Education Minister, Kirsty Williams, has confirmed that schools will reopen from Monday 15<sup>th</sup> March for face-to-face teaching, and Welsh Government has released guidance for schools to follow to support this. This guidance asks us to give priority to Year 11 and Year 10 pupils, and to take the opportunity to check-in with pupils in Years 7-9 to check on their wellbeing and ensure that they are ready to return to fulltime onsite learning (expected to be 12<sup>th</sup> April).

Although we would ideally like all pupils back on site, the guidance is clear that this is not to be a 'full return' to school and that we need to consider the safety of the school site whilst bringing pupils in. We will therefore be operating a phased return, beginning with one year group for the start of the first week, with no more than two year groups on any one day during the two week period. Year 11 pupils will spend 9 days on site, Year 10 will have 4 days and Years 7-9 will each spend one day per week in school. Remote learning will continue for pupils at home while they are not on site.

The days your child should attend school are as follows:

#### w/c 15<sup>th</sup> March:

Monday: Year 11 only, all other year groups remote learning  
Tuesday: Year 11 and Year 10, all other year groups remote learning  
Wednesday: Year 11 and Year 9, all other year groups remote learning  
Thursday: Year 11 and Year 8, all other year groups remote learning  
Friday: Year 11 and Year 7, all other year groups remote learning

#### w/c 22<sup>nd</sup> March:

Monday: Year 11 and Year 10, all other year groups remote learning  
Tuesday: Year 11 and Year 10, all other year groups remote learning  
Wednesday: Year 11 and Year 10, all other year groups remote learning  
Thursday: Year 11 and Year 9, all other year groups remote learning  
Friday: Years 7 and Year 8, all other year groups remote learning  
(note: Year 11 will not attend on this Friday)

Pupils will follow their normal timetable for these days. They should attend for the normal school start time of 8.30am, though we will operate a staggered entrance to the school building as we did before Christmas. The times of the day will remain the same as they have been for the past 6 weeks whilst at home, as we wish to keep them the same as the remote lesson times – the school day will start at 8.30am and finish at 2.25-2.30pm for all pupils (as before, we will have a slightly staggered early finish for the younger on-site pupils to avoid mixing of different year groups at the school gate).

Please note the following important points:

- All pupils should wear **normal school uniform**
- There will be **no canteen** facilities for this two week period – all pupils should bring a packed lunch to school (pupils who receive Free School Meals will continue to receive home deliveries of these)
- All safety precautions will continue, with some additions:
  - **Face coverings will be required of all pupils when in school and especially in classrooms** - this is a change to our previous expectations, and is a result of the change to guidance from Welsh Government for wearing masks in any areas if the school where full social distancing cannot occur **including classrooms**. This does not apply for pupils with medical exemptions. We do ask that all parents support the school in this policy to help limit any possible transmission of Covid-19 as we return.
  - **Lateral Flow Tests (LFTs) will be made available for all Year 10 and Year 11 pupils, and staff**. This is on a voluntary basis but again we ask that you support the school's risk assessment by encouraging your Year 10/11 child to take part. They will be conducted twice a week at home, and will advise of a likely positive case in advance (even where a pupil is asymptomatic). I will give you further information on the system, including how they will be distributed to pupils and how you can give your consent, as soon as I can.
- **Car parking** has been affected by the position of the new vaccination centre in the leisure centre. Parents who drop-off/pick up pupils by car will need to **use the railway station car park** to do so, not the leisure centre rugby club and also not the front of the school.
- **Pupils who currently attend one of our 'hubs' can continue to do so**. We will confirm if their timings need to change (they will not change for key worker children). On days their year group is in school, hub pupils should follow their normal timetable.
- We expect **school buses to run as normal**, but public service bus routes (eg. the 151) are not controlled by us and you should be aware that they may not currently be as efficient as they were before Christmas.
- **Some Year 10 pupils may be required to attend school separately of their allocated days**, to support their assessments for GCSE English Literature. If this is the case, parents will be notified separately.
- Face –to-face lessons for Years 10 and 11 will be as normal, although teachers are aware of the anxieties some pupils have about returning and will be sensitive to these. For Years 7-9, we believe a huge part of pupils' wellbeing encompasses their ability to approach and complete their academic work, feel comfortable in lessons and when following school structures etc. Therefore pupils will follow their normal timetable and lessons will be as 'normal' as possible, albeit with a sense of checking in on the pupils and 'reconnecting' to set new work for their final week of remote

learning. Pastoral staff (including the wellbeing team) will be able to use the time available to check-in with pupils for whom they have concerns, arrange appointments etc. We want to ensure that all pupils, including Key Stage 3, are confident and secure in the expected full return to school on 12<sup>th</sup> April. We feel that one day a week is just about sufficient to do this.

- Due to this changing situation as we prepare for a full reopening, and particularly as staff begin to prepare the new Year 11 assessments, **we may need to amend our remote learning programme.** For example, with most teaching staff on site we may struggle with the wifi requirements for multiple live registrations/lessons (school wifi does not tend to be as fast or reliable as home wifi); equally we need to find some staff time to enable them to prepare the new Year 11 assessment material alongside them welcoming pupils back to the site. I will confirm any changes later this week or as required, and trust you will understand why these are needed.

Thank you again, from all staff and governors, for the huge support you have shown the school throughout this period. I am sure you are as keen as we are to get all the children back on the school site as soon as we safely can, and in line with our guidance.

I hope you and your family are safe and well. We are all very much looking forward to seeing all the pupils next week.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Thompson' with a small dot at the end.

Mr. A. Thompson  
Headteacher