



NEWBRIDGE
SCHOOL

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11th March 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

Return to School 15th March – Further Update

Further to my letter on 9th March with the details for the return of face-to-face learning from 15th March, I would like to give you an update on some important changes:

Uniform requirement

Following representations from parents and the genuine problems some families will face with securing new uniform items whilst almost all shops are closed – particularly the fitting of new shoes and trousers – we have decided that **pupils will be allowed to wear their own clothes to school for the period of 15th – 26th March**. I would ask that all parents check that any clothes worn to school are comfortable and appropriate for school i.e. no heels or open shoes, no controversial logos/slogans, and no clothing that is more revealing than normal school uniform would be. The weather is not currently predicted to be hot, so this includes no shorts/short skirts etc. This change does not affect the rules on make-up and jewellery, which remain unchanged for this time. I am sure no pupils will abuse this privilege but please check before they leave for school. Any pupils wearing clothing inappropriate for the school site may be asked to return home to change. We believe strongly in the importance of a smart uniform to show pride and belonging in Newbridge School, as I know parents do, and uniform also removes the pressure from pupils to dress a certain way/own a certain brand. Therefore, if your child would rather wear school uniform for this two weeks, that is absolutely fine. Equally, **we are currently expecting a return to full school uniform on the return to school after Easter (Monday 12th April)**. If Wales does open its shops fully, as expected, please use the holiday period to update your child's uniform where required. If families have suffered extreme hardship as a result of Covid-19, and replacing uniform items will be a problem, please email me directly at school with details of your situation. For PE, pupils should attempt to wear their PE kit as usual.

Remote Learning

In my letter of 9th March, I suggested we may have to make some changes to our remote learning programme. This is as a result of the new Year 11 assessment requirements, which mean that a significant amount of staff time has to be spent preparing and checking materials to ensure that our Year 11 pupils have the best possible materials to help them to succeed when they return to school. I am disappointed to have to make any changes at this time, particularly as our remote learning had been going so well, but I hope you understand that they are needed to ensure that the staff focus can be placed on the significant amount of work they have to complete in a very short space of time. The changes are fairly minor, and with all our pupils having at least two days in school over the next two weeks, then returning full-time after Easter, I do not feel they will negatively impact the pupils in any way. Not all pupils will see these changes, as they will depend on their individual teacher's involvement in the preparation of assessment material (though most teachers are involved). The changes are as follows:

New minimum requirements for 15th – 26th March):

- Staff will be given the option of replacing live lessons with pre-recorded lesson introductions/explanations (with accompanying lesson tasks), at the minimum level previously set for live lessons (once per week per class in En/Ma/Sci, once per fortnight in other subjects). This will enable staff to plan their time more appropriately for preparing assessment materials in teams.
- For other lessons, work will be uploaded on Google Classroom as before. Staff will now check their emails/Google Classrooms once a day (minimum) to answer pupil questions, clarify misunderstandings etc, rather than being 'available' every lesson.
- Pupils will continue to submit work and staff will acknowledge it/give general brief comments as appropriate, but detailed feedback will not be issued during this fortnight.
- 'Live' morning registration will stay, as we continue to feel this is an important time in the morning for pupils in all year groups to check in and see familiar faces.
- Whilst staff are on site, we remain concerned about the capacity of the broadband/wifi to meet full streaming needs – so there is a potential that live registration across the school may struggle. We do not control the internet capacity of the school, so we are crossing our fingers!
- Remember that despite any changes, Year 11 pupils will have 9 full days out of 10 of face-to-face teaching, Year 10 will 4 full days, and Years 7-9 will have two full days each.

Face Coverings

We will be following Welsh Government requirements for pupils and staff to wear face coverings in the school building and also in classrooms. However, I do worry that all day is a long time for pupils to wear a mask. Therefore, we will follow the new guidance by **removing the requirement for masks to be worn outside the school building** (i.e. in the yards at break, lunchtime etc) providing they are within their contact year group. Pupils **must** bring a mask to school and show it at the school gate when they enter in the morning; they will then need to put it on to enter the building. At the ends of breaks and lunchtimes they will need to put masks on again to go back inside. I would also like to remind everyone that masks must be worn on all transport to school (public and school buses, and trains).

Covid and LFT testing

Please remember not to send your child to school if they are showing any signs of Covid-19 symptoms (continuous cough, raised temperature, loss of taste/smell). LFT tests will be available for all Year 10 and Year 11 pupils – parental consent letters will be given to the pupils on Monday and Tuesday to bring home for signing. When we receive the signed form back, we will distribute tests to the pupils. They should do the test at home (the instructions are quite easy once you have done the test the first time, and there are videos online to help).

I'm sure there will be many questions as we go through this important time. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with the school if you need any further information.

Yours faithfully,



Mr. A. Thompson
Headteacher