



HEADTEACHER / PRIFATHRAWES
HANNAH E. CASTLE
B.A. Hons., N.P.Q.H.

1.6.2020

Dear Parent/Carer

I write to you just as we start the last half term of this academic year. I truly hope that you continue to keep safe and well and continue to adapt to the 'new normal'. I had hoped that we would have had more clarity about the next phase for education in recent Welsh Government announcements but unfortunately we still await this and the picture is still not clear.

Distance learning

As you know we have been setting work and providing feedback using 'Google Classroom' as our main platform. We are also, from a distance, trying to monitor the levels of engagement in work as we really do not want to see pupils falling behind. As you can imagine, we are concerned about the future impact for those pupils who are not engaging and are proud and pleased with those many pupils who are keeping up to date and submitting work. We rely on parental support in this area in terms of organising a work schedule and showing an interest and offering encouragement in what pupils are doing. If you are experiencing particular difficulty with your son or daughter engaging with work or if there are difficulties personal to you then please once again I would encourage you to contact us, we are here to help. Please look at the website and previous letters for contact details. Thank you to those parent/carers who do keep us updated and maintain contact.

Year 9

As from Monday 1st June 2020 Year 9 pupils will follow a slightly amended timetable which is focussed on the start of GCSE courses. All Year 9 pupils can find details on the Year 9 Google Classroom and the new timetable can also be found on the school website. We really want pupils to start strong with their new GCSE courses and so engagement and participation over the next 7 weeks will be crucial for future outcomes.

Year 11

For those Year 11 pupils who have demonstrated an interest in continuing their education in our Sixth form to study A Levels I would like to draw your attention to subject specific bridging units which will be released today and which will help pupils prepare for A Level courses. The bridging units have been posted on A Lifetime of Learning Google Classroom. If pupils do meet the requirements for A Level courses then this preparatory work will be very useful and beneficial. I strongly encourage pupils to look at and engage with these units.

Centre Assessed Grades

We are now in the final stages of finalising Cynffig's returns to the WJEC for Year 11, 12 and 13.



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This has been a long and agonising process as teachers have had to wrestle with the rank orders for each subject that the WJEC requires us to produce. We have tried to remain ethical and fair in this process to ensure pupils get results that are, as far as possible to be, 'fair' ones.

As you all are fully aware our Centre Assessed Grades need to be backed up by evidence. As teachers we cannot second guess how hard a pupil might have worked during April and May. I imagine that outcomes this Summer will be about recognising pupils who have worked consistently, rather than those who left it to the end. This is a consequence of the impact of examinations being cancelled and the national crisis we find ourselves in.

I would like to thank you for your support in this area but I also need to remind you that the WJEC has been very clear that teachers are not, under any circumstances, allowed to tell pupils what grades the school has awarded them. In the same way the examination board will not be revealing whether or how much they have scaled results in a particular subject in a particular school, depending on whether the school's judgement seemed generous or harsh.

We have had to determine Centre Assessed Grades on evidence, the work completed during the course of their GCSE courses or Post 16 studies. Also we have been made aware that the examination board will also be looking at historical data when they are awarding grades. We need to be fair and realistic and please remember that Cynffig did not choose this system. We just have to work with it. Please be assured that we have been thorough and ethical in our approach.

Re-opening school

What we do know at the moment is that there is partial re-opening of schools in England. We are not sure where Wales is with re-opening, the position is less clear yet but as Headteacher I am sure you understand that I have had to start giving this a lot of thought. We are having to think about what a return will look and feel like. We know it will be different. We might have to stagger start and finish times, shorten breaks, review our teaching spaces, consider the provision of food, limit movement around the school and ensure deep cleaning is to the required standard. We have most certainly not had to finalise any details yet and I can assure you that I will work with the guidance provided by Welsh Government and the Local Authority who will support us in our endeavours in making sure that our school community is not exposed to any unacceptable level of risk. We continue to await information, guidance and clarity.

As ever, please take good care of yourselves and your families. I am sure I will be in touch again shortly. If you do have any compliments or concerns then please contact us at admin.cynffig@bridgend.gov.uk

With my very best wishes

Hannah

Mrs. Hannah Castle
Headteacher

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