

## Important Changes To the Start Of The New Term

I do apologise for contacting you all so soon after sending my “last communication of the term”. As you know we were planning on welcoming pupils back to school on Tuesday January 5<sup>th</sup> after the scheduled training day on Monday January 4<sup>th</sup>.

Having made the necessary arrangement to reopen as planned in January (as requested by Welsh Government and the Local Authority) the Welsh Government have since issued new guidance. All head teachers in Flintshire were called to an emergency meeting yesterday (December 17<sup>th</sup>) regarding these arrangements for the return of schools in January.

Unfortunately, due to the ever-rising rates of infection across Wales and with the anticipated third wave expected in January, the Welsh Government have directed that children do not return to ‘normal schooling’ on 5th January. This is not a school or local decision but a National directive . Please see attached letter from Claire Homard on behalf of Flintshire CC.

Blended learning will therefore commence for all pupils on 5th January. The teachers will communicate Blended Learning tasks and arrangements for your child via Google Classroom on Monday 4th January. Teachers will be available to give advice and offer feedback between 9am and 3pm from Tuesday January 5<sup>th</sup> to Friday January 8<sup>th</sup>.

Kinnerton Kids Club and Little Acorns will also be closed until pupils are back in school for face-to-face teaching.

However, due to the logistics regarding childcare and the implications on our risk assessments, having them formally agreed by FCC and sharing them with staff, we are planning for the childcare offering to start on 6th January for Critical key workers. Due to the increased level of risk, the pupils will remain separately in their own classes (Bubbles). Please only use this provision if you do not have any alternative childcare.

Ysgol Derwen therefore only be open for childcare provision for critical key workers from Wednesday January 6<sup>th</sup>. Childcare will be available between 8.30am and 4pm as directed by Local Authority guidance. Please refer to the Welsh Government guidance on critical workers if you believe you are eligible. Details regarding childcare is detailed below.

### Critical Key Worker Childcare provision

Following the recent announcement by FCC that school’s will not be open to all pupils for face to face teaching on January 5th, if you believe you are eligible can you please ask your employer to email confirmation using the attached form to and return it to [kimail@hwbcymru.net](mailto:kimail@hwbcymru.net) by 8 am on Monday January 4<sup>th</sup>.

For us to be able to confirm your place, please could you ensure:

1. You fall in the ‘critical worker’ category as described by Welsh Government.
2. That you are required to work on any of the days that school will be closed to the majority of pupils and are unable to work from home.

Once we receive this information confirming you are eligbl for the childcare provision, we will confirm your place and issue you with information regarding dropping off, picking up and timings etc on Monday January 4<sup>th</sup>.

Even though Welsh Government have stated that they want all pupils back for face-to-face learning by January 18<sup>th</sup>, I will do my best to welcome children back to Ysgol Derwen on Monday January 11<sup>th</sup>. As you know by now however, a lot can happen between now and the start of the new term!

**Sorry again for informing you of another late change to our plans but the most important thing is that we do everything we can to protect ourselves and our loved ones. Please keep following the news over the Christmas break as this is an ever-changing situation and I will only send any further communications out over the next two weeks if it is urgent and changes the current plans.**

**I hope you all have a relaxing Christmas break and that the whole school community stays safe and healthy.**

**Kind regards**

**R Jones**