

**Good afternoon,
Hope you are keeping safe and well.**

Covid Update

After all the disruption caused by the Covid outbreak at Ysgol Derwen recently, I am very pleased that this week has been a little quieter so far! We had five additional cases over the weekend and two over the last couple of days. Fortunately all remaining staff who undertook a PCR test last week came back negative. It doesn't mean that we are now over the outbreak so I please kindly ask you all again to continue to work with the school to try and keep the community safe and get all the children back in Ysgol Derwen as soon as possible.

A huge thank you to everyone who is currently being so cautious with regards to Covid by keeping your child at home if they have any of the symptoms, and for also taking them for regular PCR tests. A number of pupils who were displaying common cold symptoms have gone on to have a positive PCR test. We are all hoping that the situation will start to ease off by half term so please don't take any chances in sending a child with symptoms to school as cases will soon rise again if we give the virus a chance.

We currently have 36 positive cases from Year 1 to 6 (19 of these being in the Year 4 Class and only four in the Upper Foundation). I am very pleased that Miss Ellingham has returned to school and Mrs Atkins is due back tomorrow. Both are still exhausted after their isolation period and will take a while to get back to full fitness. Both Year 4 and 6 parents evenings will take place after half term when Mrs King will hopefully be back at school.

Cases locally are still very high in both Higher Kinnerton and Penyffordd, as outlined in the newspaper article below. Penyffordd School is also having a similar experience to us at the moment!

School Events

As you know, we have taken the decision again to have our parents evening online to avoid groups of people coming into the school building and potentially spreading the virus. Swimming lessons have been called off as the venue and the bus did not want to take a risk in having our students on their site. Some music lessons are still taking place but with tight Covid protocols being followed. Other teachers from the music service have also suspended lessons until the outbreak is over. Contractors due in the building have also decided not to attend our site until the situation improves.

This approach within the building will unfortunately continue until at least the end of this term. As a result we will not be in a position to hold Christmas concerts or FODS Christmas Fairs etc for another year. I love the Christmas period so I am as disappointed as anyone else over the current situation, but to invite large numbers of adults to join and face large groups of singing children in the warmest

and least ventilated room in the school is not a risk I am willing to take. It is not worth putting the pupils and their families at risk of a situation similar to the one we are currently experiencing so close to the end of term which could have a huge impact on many families over the Christmas break. The events of the last week have demonstrated to us all how quickly Covid can spread within a school environment. There are a lot of school staff across Flintshire who have caught Covid at school and then passed it on to family members, some going on to be hospitalised and in one case, sadly passing away.

Even without Covid we would probably not be in a position to put on concerts or FODS events as we also have the added issue this year of the new build. As a result, Little Acorns are using our school hall daily each morning and again each evening until 6pm for the KS2 wrap around care. The furniture for the new build has also been delivered and is currently stored in boxes along the front of the hall where our stage should be.

What we are planning on doing this year is to ask each class to perform an item such as a poem or a song which can be filmed in isolation. This can then be shared with all parents in the lead up to Christmas.

Hopefully things will start to improve in the week leading to half term and we can look forward to having some sort of normality back at Ysgol Derwen soon.

Thank you for your continued support,

Stay safe

R Jones

<https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/covid-wales-worst-affected-areas-21836728>

Covid symptoms

Please be alert for the main symptoms of COVID-19, which are:

- **A new or continuous cough**
- **A high temperature**
- **A loss of or change to sense of smell or taste**

Wider symptoms

A wider range of symptoms MAY be associated with Covid-19 infection, if they are new, persistent, or unusual, and are not caused or explained by a condition such as hay fever.

The new wider symptoms of Covid-19 are:

- **Feeling unusually tired**
- **General 'flu-like aches and pains (myalgia)**

- **Sore throat and / or hoarseness**
- **Shortness of breath or wheezing**
- **Persistent headache**
- **Runny or blocked nose**
- **Feeling sick (nausea), vomiting or diarrhoea**

If you, or a member of your household, has one or more of the ‘wider symptoms’ it does not necessarily mean you have COVID-19 but they should still be tested nevertheless.