



4th June 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian

As the new Headteacher of St. Brigid's School, let me convey how truly proud I am to be leading our school in the next phase of its history. Many of you will know that I attended the school myself and have personal experience of the outstanding academic and pastoral provision that I received, becoming a teacher myself in the hope that I could develop a love of learning and a sense of empathy and compassion in my students in the same way that my teachers had done for me. This school is an extremely special place and it is a great privilege to be able to work with your families in the community of St. Brigid's.

It is with regret that we are not meeting in person - this is not the first week I envisioned, as I'm sure that you can imagine, but I know that we will meet together when we are safe to do so; but please pass on my greetings and best wishes to your children, and how much I am looking forward to meeting them.

Most of you will have now heard the news from Kirsty Williams, our Education Minister. Schools in Wales will reopen in a 'phased and staggered' approach for children from June 29th until July 27th, with an additional week's holiday during the Autumn Half Term break to compensate. The Senior Leadership Team and The Governing Body have been, and will continue, to work tirelessly with Denbighshire County Council, conforming to Welsh Government and Public Health Wales guidance, in order to plan our provision to open the school on that date.

According to the guidelines, we can only safely accommodate one third of our school's capacity on any one day. This means that will be working on a rota of pupils and we will have to have certain cohorts in at certain times. We will endeavour to group siblings together to limit stress on families. We may also have to stagger the start and end times of the school day to limit 'crunch points' of pupil numbers. Once we have put this plan together, we will send it out to you.

The focus of the children's time in school, as outlined by the minister, will be to 'check-in, catch-up and prepare' for September. The activities in school will be focused on wellbeing, to help our children become accustomed to schooling again after their time away, to catch up with friends and teachers, and to prepare our children for the 'new normal' of socially-distanced schooling for the near future. During this time, the existing online learning on Google Classroom and Seesaw will continue in a similar or slightly altered capacity, in what the minister calls 'blended learning'.

Should you wish to keep your child at home to continue with online learning only, until September, you have every right to do so, and there will not be any penalties. Our first priority is the safety of your children and family. All of the transition work for transition groups (Foundation Phase, Year 1 into 2, new Year 3 children, new Year 5 children and Year 6 into 7) will all be sent home and available online. The children will not be missing out on any transition work. The curriculum will be updated by Qualifications Wales, so that our current Year 10 and 12 pupils will not be at a disadvantage next summer. The current GCSE and AS/A-level grades are currently being submitted using the plethora of evidence that our teachers have been collecting for two years.

As you can imagine, like you, our teachers have been working very hard on setting and marking work online whilst dealing with working in a new setting, with children at home and with many shielding or living with vulnerable family members. I have been impressed and heartened by our staff who have continued to contribute to the academic and pastoral success of our pupils during

this time, as well as those who have volunteered to look after key workers' children in the hub at school, through term time and in the Easter and Half Term holiday. I am sure that you will join me in conveying our thanks and appreciation to our staff at St. Brigid's. We do also need to appreciate that not all of our staff will be safe to return to work on 29th June. We will be patient and make every reasonable adjustment in our power.

I must also thank you for your support of our school and your continued patience during these difficult and challenging times. Information and guidance is arriving on a daily basis, and we are doing our very best to put plans in place, with the necessary risk assessments and legal documents, conforming to government guidelines.

I assure you that as soon as we have plans in place they will be shared with you. Please do remember that we are trying our very best in unprecedented circumstances; but the safety of our pupils, families and staff is at the forefront of every decision.

May God bless you and your families at this trying time, and I hope that we are able to meet as a community very soon.

With best wishes and kind regards



Mrs L. Crimes M.A. MCCT
Pennaeth / Headteacher