

Hi all,

Just a quick note to let you all know that the Education Minister has today announced plans for the reopening of schools across Wales for the new term in September.

I appreciate that many of you are parents and you are no doubt anxious about what schooling will look like for your children come September when schools reopen for the new term.

Kirsty Williams has confirmed that the autumn term will start on September 1<sup>st</sup> and schools should now prepare for the return of all pupils.

It is anticipated that schools may want to focus on priority year groups in the first week or two, such as those starting secondary schools, those sitting exams next summer or those in reception classes.

She has stressed that, in the interests of all of our children and young people, all schools will be open to **all pupils** by the 14<sup>th</sup> September at the very latest.

I also welcome the Minister's announcement relating to the £29 million of additional funding to assist with the recovery phase and further details regarding this fund will be issued over the next few days. We are unsure of how much CCBC will receive at present as Welsh Government is yet to provide details of how the money will be allocated to individual local authorities.

I'm sure you will agree that the past few months have been a very challenging time for the whole education sector. Many of our pupils have been anxious about the impact of the outbreak and the associated loss of learning, as well as not being able to see their friends.

Our schools have been working hard to get pupils safely back into the classroom to check in and catch up before the start of the summer holidays and this announcement will bring additional pressures to make sure that plans are in place ready for the September return.

Schools will organise planning and preparation days to review risk assessments, processes and associated systems to ensure individual sites can welcome pupils and staff back safely.

As stated, some specific groups of learners may need to be prioritised during the first week of term, such as Year 7, 12, 13 and Special Units for Secondary and Early Years and Year 6 in the primary sector.

From the second week of term, schools will start to maximise the number of learners in attendance leading to a full return on the 14<sup>th</sup> of September when school attendance will be compulsory.

Welsh Government guidance will be issued early next week and it is expected that as the situation evolves, the guidance will be continuously updated. I appreciate each school setting will have local challenges to address, including the availability of

staffing. This and other specific areas such as school transport, catering and cleaning will be worked through in detail over the next few weeks, and further guidance will be provided thereafter.

It is our understanding that the resumption of schooling will mean that the Childcare Hub provision for key workers will come to an end.

I'm sure you may have many questions and queries and would suggest that you continue to direct these to individual school headteachers. I want to assure you that we are working closely with schools to ensure they have the detail to update all parents accordingly. Further, supportive information will also be provided through our website and social media channels.

I hope this information is of assistance to you and I will, of course, continue to keep you updated as the situation progresses over the coming weeks.

Regards

Christina