

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope you and your family continue to be safe and well.

As promised, please find below the most recent update.

Schools and the Local Authority (LA) are continuing to work together to ensure all Welsh Government guidelines are adhered to in schools, making them a safe environment for your children to continue their learning.

Social distancing and hand washing are still the most effective protection against this virus. Please talk to your children about keeping their distance and regularly washing their hands for at least 20 seconds.

The LA have supplied five reusable and adjustable face coverings along with a plastic bag for storage to all school staff. We have also distributed these to pupils within secondary schools.

Secondary schools are reinforcing the importance of the use of face coverings and the strong recommendation of wearing them within their everyday practice, where social distancing of 2m is not possible and on school transport.

Please remind and encourage your child to wear them in these circumstances, however, please be mindful that some pupils cannot wear face coverings due to medical or other personal reasons.

This guidance and other recommended measures will continue to be embedded within the school day along with educating pupils on the virus and encouraging them to stay safe and well in this pandemic. We are also requesting parents to observe and reinforce the guidance with their children and work with us to combat this virus and reduce the spread within the county borough.

We ask for all parents and pupils support in following the social distancing guidance in school yards, outside of school gates and at bus stops. **No congregating please.**

Face coverings are not required to be worn in primary schools as per Welsh Government guidance.

Welsh Government advice about the use of face coverings in school settings can be found on their website: -

- Technical Advisory Group – Face coverings - <https://gov.wales/technical-advisory-group-face-coverings-children-and-young-people-education-settings>
- Welsh Government – latest advice on the coronavirus - <https://gov.wales/education-coronavirus>

Schools are working with the LA in relation to current attendance figures so we can target and deliver our support to those that need it most.

There are robust procedures in place to manage potential positive cases of Coronavirus; these include cleaning staff onsite to keep the school clean, additional supplies of cleaning products and direct access to support and advice to ensure schools remain a safe environment for teaching and learning.

I appreciate if you may have concerns about the disruption of to your child's education and I would advise you to work with your school to minimise the impact of this.

Please find below a flow chart that you might find helpful in understanding the process to be followed if a child, family member or close contact shows symptoms or tests positive for Covid-19.

Flow chart for parents (PDF) -

<https://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/CaerphillyDocs/Coronavirus/FlowChartParentsPrint>

Due to the local lockdown and the number of positive cases in the Caerphilly County Borough we have taken the decision to continue to ask children to bring their own packed lunches up until half term. Catering will now resume after half term instead of the 1st October 2020.

Pupils eligible for free school meals will continue to receive deliveries until 23rd October 2020.

Due to the increased number of cases in the county borough, schools are reviewing the re-introduction of breakfast clubs and are evaluating their individual risk assessments first to ensure the clubs can run safely. I will update you on this shortly.

It is pleasing to see the number of reported cases within the county borough decrease over the last week. However, we will remain vigilant and are incredibly grateful for your continued support and understanding in these uncertain times. Take care.

Regards

Keri Cole

Chief Education Officer

Caerphilly County Borough Council

Further information and frequently asked questions about schools can be found on the CCBC website here <https://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/Services/Coronavirus/School-and-classroom-closures?lang=en-GB>