

**Uned Cymorth Cyfarwyddiaeth Addysg a
Chymorth i Deuluoedd (UCCACD)
Education and Family Support Directorate –
Directorate Support Unit (EDSU)**

Deialu uniongyrchol / Direct line: 01656 642617

Ein cyf / Our ref: EDSU
Eich cyf / Your ref:

Dyddiad / Date: 16 December 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

I would like to provide you with an update regarding how schools in Bridgend will operate following the Christmas break.

Earlier today, all schools in Wales were informed that the Minister for Education and Welsh Language will be providing schools with two planning days at the start of the new spring term. This will allow headteachers time to assess staffing capacity and put the necessary measures in place to support the return of learners. The two planning days will be held on Tuesday 4 January and Wednesday 5 January 2022.

It is important to note that there will be no on-site (ie in-school) provision for any pupil on 4 or 5 January. Similarly, schools will not be offering remote learning provision during these two days. At present, all pupils attending Bridgend schools will return to school on Thursday 6 January 2022. However, this position may change if circumstances (eg staffing capacity issues) dictate. Individual schools will update parents/carers in due course if arrangements change. Where necessary, secondary schools will prioritise pupils in examination classes.

Breakfast clubs, where applicable, are planned to recommence on Monday 10 January 2022. However, parents/cares are advised that this might change depending on staffing levels. Parents/carers with children eligible for free school meals will be provided with a digital payment voucher during the week commencing Monday 3 January 2022.

The local authority and schools readily acknowledge that this is a difficult time for all learners, especially those learners who are preparing for examinations. At present, there is no change to the January 2022 examination timetable. Schools will continue to provide support for all learners to ensure the learning environment is safe and learners' emotional wellbeing is supported.

Welsh Government has confirmed that it expects all school staff and learners of secondary age and above to test three times a week (on Monday, Wednesday and Friday) using lateral flow devices in the week before returning to school and to then continue regularly testing three times a week after the start of term in January.

The wearing of face coverings will continue for secondary school pupils and all staff in all settings in all communal areas and classrooms where physical distancing cannot be maintained. However, there will be some learners and staff who are exempt from wearing face coverings.

Parents/carers are reminded that pupils are advised not come to school if they, or anyone in their household, have been tested positive for COVID-19 or is displaying any of the cardinal COVID-19 symptoms.

In conclusion, I would like to thank you all, once again, for the enormous support you have given your child's school during such a challenging period.

I hope you all enjoy a peaceful Christmas and a happy new year.

Yours sincerely

Lindsay

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lindsay Iorwerth Harvey'.

Yours sincerely

Lindsay Iorwerth Harvey (Mr)
Corporate Director – Education and Family Support
Bridgend County Borough Council