



17 July 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

RE: Coronavirus (COVID-19)

This is my last letter to you of the academic year. And what a year it has been! I trust that you and your family have been able to find new opportunities in an otherwise extremely challenging period of lockdown. It has been joyous to have children back in the school building which has, for too long, felt a quiet and lonely place to be. As restrictions ease, I sincerely hope you are able to enjoy the summer break together.

I would like to thank my colleagues for all their efforts this year. Since the school closed on 20 March 2020, staff have made over 31,000 telephone calls to keep in touch with pupils. In addition to producing our three-phase approach to distance learning, they have delivered 450 learning packs, 150 laptops and 250 transition packs to children's homes. Staff have contributed over £3000 of their own money and raised a further £5000 to support our foodbank, which provides food, toiletries and gifts to nearly 50 families each week. They have patrolled over 150 miles to engage children in our community and provided daily supervision for the children of key workers critical to the fight against COVID-19. And, far from taking a break, our staff have volunteered to continue our summer school provision and undertake transition days for Year 6 throughout their summer holiday. I could not be more grateful for their extraordinary work!

Learning From Home

Learning from home isn't easy and it is certainly no substitute for learning in school with a teacher. However, I'd like to encourage pupils to complete all of their modules on Hwb if they haven't done so. They will remain available until September. The final modules for Key Stage 3 will be published on Monday 20 July 2020, so they can continue working during the summer! You may occasionally find a glitch on Hwb; don't worry too much about this. Email us at closurehelpline@stteilos.com and we'll refer the problem on your behalf. The team at Hwb may take a little time to respond so please do be patient!

School reports

Regrettably, we are not in a position to provide a full, written report this year. Without undertaking summative assessments – and after such an extended period of school closure – it is impossible to meaningfully comment on learning and progress. Instead, we have provided a short summary by email of key learning covered this year and next steps (in line with *The Relaxation of School Reporting Requirements (Wales) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020*). This lacks the type of personalisation and detail we'd normally provide but is our hope that the regular telephone calls with Form Tutors have kept you and your child in good contact with the school.

Results days

The cancellation of external examinations this year has been a difficult blow for many pupils. Like most schools, we will be emailing results to pupils this year due to the restrictions currently placed on physical visits to the building. Your child can expect to receive their results via school email on Thursday 13 August 2020 (for level 3) and Thursday 20 August 2020 (for levels 1 and 2). However, if your child needs us, we will be available in school. Individuals can visit us between 8.00am and 10.00am on both days for any support with next steps.

New York trip

Given the current public health context, many parents and carers are nervous about the New York trip scheduled for the autumn term. Perhaps unsurprisingly, travel companies and insurers have not demonstrated a great deal of flexibility and cancellation at this stage would be costly for all. Therefore, I have taken the decision to delay the trip by one year until October 2021 and we have negotiated a price which is only negligibly higher than planned. This will raise questions and, in the next school year, we will ensure you are given an opportunity to discuss the trip in more detail with us.

Returning to school in September

On 9 July 2020, the Minister for Education announced that schools would reopen for all pupils from 14 September 2020 (<https://gov.wales/written-statement-arrangements-schools-september>). This was, at last, the news we had been waiting for! Operational guidance was published on 13 July 2020 (<https://gov.wales/written-statement-publication-guidance-support-educational-settings-increase-their-operations>) and we have subsequently designed a provision which ensures not only safety for all but also a broad and balanced curriculum.

I am delighted that, from 14 September 2020, we will be in a position to offer six lessons per day, five days per week to all pupils. The school will look and feel different – with pupils operating in ‘contact groups’ and remaining within zones in the building – however our plans continue to uphold the caring, nurturing and loving character of St Teilo’s. Far from being worried about operating in the new normal, we are excited by the opportunities to do things differently and even better than before.

This is, as you might imagine, somewhat of a logistical nightmare! As always, I will issue full and transparent guidance so that you and your child can understand in detail how the school will operate going forward. Information, risk assessments and advice will be published on the school website before the commencement of the new term. In the meantime, I have included frequently asked questions with this letter.

Finally, I would like to thank you for your ongoing support and kindness during my first year of headship. It has been a privilege and delight to lead #TeamTeilo and I look forward to September with enthusiasm.

With every prayer and blessing,

Mr I Loynd
Headteacher

Frequently Asked Questions

When will my child return to school?

Lessons for all pupils will commence on **Monday 14 September 2020**. Pupils will also be required to attend an induction session to learn about the new school arrangements, as follows:

Year 7	Friday 4 September 2020
Year 8	Monday 7 September 2020
Year 9	Tuesday 8 September 2020
Year 10	Wednesday 9 September 2020
Year 11	Thursday 10 September 2020
Year 12	Friday 11 September 2020 (including enrolment to the sixth form)
Year 13	Friday 11 September 2020

What is a contact group?

A contact group is a 'social bubble'. As far as possible, contact groups will not be permitted to mix. In Years 7, 8 and 9, contact groups will normally be around 30 in size. In Years 10, 11, 12 and 13, contact groups will normally be up to 250 in size.

How will contact groups be kept apart?

Each contact group will operate within a 'zone' in the school building. Each zone has its own entrance and exit, classrooms and picnic area for dining outdoors. Pupils will remain within their zone however teachers will be able to move between zones.

Will the full curriculum be available?

The school is able to offer the full curriculum, with very few modifications, in Key Stages 4 and 5. In Key Stage 3, there will be a slight slimming of the curriculum, particularly in practical subjects. These changes will be mitigated as far as possible through enrichment activities and extracurricular provision. All children can expect to follow a broad and balanced curriculum.

Where will children play at break time?

The Yard, MUGA and Astroturf will be available daily to each year group.

Will uniform be required?

The normal arrangements for uniform will be in place.

How will children and staff be kept safe?

Much like the arrangements for the summer term, there will be carefully managed movement within the building and handwashing and sanitising stations throughout. Adults will remain socially distant and children will be required to face one direction in classrooms. A full risk assessment will be available prior to the commencement of the autumn term as detailed plans are finalised during the summer.

What provision will there be for vulnerable children or children with additional learning needs?

Each zone will offer the full range of nurture, intervention and withdrawal provision. Our wellbeing and inclusion teams will be deployed within zones to work alongside children and provide the type of specialised support needed to help them thrive.

Will the timings of the school day change?

Our school day will continue to operate from 8.40am until 3.00pm. The structure of the day will be changed to accommodate a sixth lesson, meaning that children will have a break between each two lessons. This will help to break up the day, let pupils stretch their legs and give more opportunities for some fresh air.

Will pupils need their own equipment?

The school will provide every child with a file for their work, a mini whiteboard for lessons and a basic supply of stationary. This is because, as far as possible, children will need to be responsible for keeping their own equipment. ***A school bag, large enough to fit an A4 file, will be an essential item for the new school year.***

Will lockers be available?

Lockers will not be available to pupils as they will not be permitted to move between zones. Therefore, every pupil will require a school bag which is large enough to store work and equipment.

Will school transport be running?

Arrangements for school transport are still being developed by the council. However, school buses will be running with safety measures in place.

Will there be catering on site?

Initially, there will be no catering available. This means that children will need to bring a packed lunch to school each day. Families who receive free school meals will continue to receive direct payments or vouchers.

What happens if there is a second wave?

Our new timetable is designed flexibly enough to allow us to provide the maximum face-to-face learning time in school. If rates of infection increase, physical distancing measures are re-imposed or staff are absent due to the track, trace and protect protocol, we are able to run the school with a half-day provision for some or all year groups. In other words, we are able to react quickly to changes in circumstances with minimum disruption to learning.

This all sounds a bit scary. Should I be worried?

Absolutely not! We want every child to have a joyful and affirming school experience. Our plans will ensure that the building remains an inviting place to be, lessons are of a high quality and arrangements for the wellbeing of children are at the heart of all we do. We do the worrying so that you don't have to.

I still have questions...

Full plans will be published at the end of the summer break. These should answer all of your questions and provide you with complete reassurance. If, at the beginning of September, you'd like to ask a question, please email headteacher@steilos.com. Every family has different circumstances and we will work with you to ensure we can provide the best possible education for your child. We will be using the next six weeks of the summer break to be as prepared as possible for a fantastic start to the new school year.