



14 September 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

A NEW SCHOOL YEAR

We return to school after what can only be described as one of the most extraordinary, most distressing and most exhausting academic years in the history of St Teilo's. The last few months have been difficult for us all, especially those who have experienced job losses, illness and death. My prayers are with you. Adding to this, the outgoing Years 11, 12 and 13 have contended with the summer results fiasco. This is now a time of healing and of self-care as we begin to refocus, recover and rebuild.

Last September, our new Senior Leadership Team took the reins. Far from being deterred by the challenging consequences of the COVID-19 outbreak, we are more motivated, more determined and more inspired than before to deliver our ambitious programme of school improvement. As the Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius said, "Never let the future disturb you. You will meet it, if you have to, with the same weapons of reason which today arm you against the present." Those weapons of reason have certainly been tested in the last months but the school is fully open once more and the business of education – of excellence, equity and faith – is continuing apace.

Of course, the real global pandemic is one of inequality, poverty, racial injustice and climate change; our school mission is more important now than it has ever been.

Staying in touch

As always, your child's Achievement Leader remains your first point of contact. Achievement Leaders have oversight of the wellbeing and learning of children and are able to act on your behalf with other members of staff in the school. They can be contacted by email as follows:

- Years 7 and 8, Mrs Pitt, r.pitt@stteilos.com
- Years 9 and 10, Mrs Williams, a.williams@stteilos.com
- Year 11, Mrs Phillips, j.phillips@stteilos.com
- Years 12 and 13, Miss Owen, e.owen@stteilos.com

If you require to speak to a teacher by telephone, a message will be taken by one of our receptionists and somebody will call you back as soon as they are available. Please note, it will no longer be possible to be transferred directly to a member of staff by telephone. I should also remind you that parents and carers must not attend the school site without prior arrangement. Access to the building is strictly controlled for the purpose of Test, Trace and Protect and visitors can only be seen by appointment.

Getting to school

We have seen a very significant rise in the number of parents and carers bringing their child to school by car. There may be many reasons for this including reasonable fears about the use of school transport. We strongly encourage families to think carefully about active travel and, where children can walk or cycle to school, they should. This is great not only for the physical and mental health of children but also for the environment. Where parents and carers have no choice but to use the car please behave responsibly and sensibly, particularly on Circle Way East. Those parking on double yellow lines, parking on raised tables, turning in the road and turning in the school entrance are causing both a nuisance and a danger. Let's try and work together and exercise some patience, negating the need for future enforcement measures.

Learning from home

If it is the case that your child is required to remain at home for a period of quarantine, a program of learning will be available from the Oak National Academy. Students will have free access to thousands of lessons and resources covering the full range of subjects and topics. Each lesson is an hour-long, delivered by a teacher with a pre-recorded video and includes quizzes, worksheets and creative activities. It's all easy to use, there's no login or password, lessons can be accessed on any device and students only need materials they can find at home.

We have already seen a number of secondary schools across Wales ask year groups to remain at home for 14 days to contain small outbreaks of COVID-19. It is perhaps now a case of when – and not if – this happens at St Teilo's. We are prepared for such an eventually and, where the school closes to a year group, there will be three daily live broadcasts covering the full curriculum. Your child will access these lessons using Microsoft Teams which is available to download for free from Hwb.

In the event that transmission rates increase, or if a large proportion of the workforce are not available, we will move to our half-day provision. This means children will attend school on a 50% basis, for three face-to-face lessons either in the morning or the afternoon.

In short, whatever the situation, we have a plan to provide as much continuity in learning as possible!

New arrangements in school

Last week, we inducted each year group so that children understand fully the new operational arrangements and their importance in keeping the school COVID-secure. If you missed my earlier correspondence and wish to review our strategy, you can find a copy here: <http://www.stteilos.com/september-reopening-plans/>. The most significant change for students, perhaps, is the 'zoning' of the building for lessons and breaks. This is proving both popular and unpopular in equal measure thus far! I am confident, however, that our approach is the safest possible with very limited impact on curriculum delivery. It is essential that every child now has a school bag. In it, they require:

- Their ring binder file (the school has provided this)
- Their zip wallet with whiteboard and equipment (the school has provided this)

- A packed lunch
- Plenty of water to drink (we recommend at least two bottles)

Please make every effort to ensure that your child attends on time, every day, fully prepared and in correct uniform. This helps to maintain a sense of good order, discipline and fellowship (or 'togetherness'). We're in this together and, together, we will flourish.

Free school meals

The parents and carers of children eligible for free school meals will continue to receive direct payments in order to purchase food for packed lunches. If your child is in Year 7, you will require an activation code for Parent Pay. This has been (or will shortly be) provided to your child by means of a letter in hard copy.

If your circumstances have changed, you may be eligible to claim free school meals for your child. You can do this if you are entitled to one of the following:

- Job Seekers Allowance (Income Based);
- Employment Support Allowance (Income Related);
- Pension Credit (Guarantee Credit);
- Child Tax Credit with annual income of less than £16,190; or
- Universal Credit with net household earnings of less than £7400.

To enquire or apply, please email freeschoolmeals@cardiff.gov.uk.

The year ahead

Much is uncertain about the year ahead as we learn to adapt to a mid-COVID world. We have robust plans, right now, for curriculum delivery and are confident that no child will 'fall behind' in their learning (whatever we understand that to mean). Our focus will remain for some time on ensuring the basics are right and teaching and learning will, understandably, take precedence in our decision making.

We do not yet know how we will approach other issues, such as parents' evenings and open evenings, and I will take some time to monitor how government guidance changes as winter draws nearer. It is likely that all such events will be delivered digitally.

I will, of course, write to you regularly to keep you abreast of the latest developments. There will also be opportunities for you to join me in live broadcasts this year as I deliver a series of short addresses about the school, its mission and methodologies. Much to ponder but also much to look forward to.

I should like to leave you with the following prayer for our school, written by The Reverend Canon Richard Lowndes, Director of Ministry and Discipleship, Diocese of Llandaff:

Heavenly Father,

*As we welcome children back to this place of learning,
help us as we embrace new ways of being our school community.*

*Help us in our support of pupils, parents and carers,
to show the love and care to which our faith calls us.*

*Lord, you know our concerns and hopes better than we do,
we ask you to bless us on this journey,
that all we do may enhance our life of learning and growing together,
so that once more we tell our joyful story,
as we continue to proclaim your Son faithfully as our lord and Saviours.*

Amen.

If you wish to contact me, please email headteacher@steilos.com and I, or another appropriate member of staff, will get back to you as soon as possible. In typical fashion, I have included some appendices to this letter to expand on the points raised.

With every prayer and blessing for this exciting new school year,

Mr I Loynd
Headteacher

Please read the appendices on the following pages.

APPENDIX 1: COVID-RELATED PUPIL ABSENCE

A 'quick reference' guide for parents and carers.

WHAT TO DO IF...	ACTION	RETURN TO SCHOOL WHEN...
<p>My child has one or more COVID-19 symptoms.</p> <p>These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High temperature. This means you feel hot to touch on the chest or back. • A new, continuous cough. This means coughing for a lot more than an hour, or three or more coughing episodes in a day. • A loss in, or change to, sense of smell or taste. This means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste or things smell or taste unusual. 	<p>DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL.</p> <p>Self-isolate with the whole household.</p> <p>Get a COVID-19 test.</p> <p>Inform the school immediately by emailing headteacher@stteilos.com.</p>	<p>Either: The test comes back negative.</p> <p>Or: 14 days have passed.</p>
<p>My child tests positive for COVID-19.</p>	<p>DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL.</p> <p>Self-isolate with the whole household.</p> <p>Inform the school immediately by emailing headteacher@stteilos.com.</p>	<p>Both: 10 days have passed.</p> <p>And: Your child feels better.</p>
<p>My child tests negative for COVID-19.</p>	<p>Inform the school immediately by emailing headteacher@stteilos.com.</p>	<p>The Headteacher confirms your child can return.</p>
<p>My child is poorly but does not have COVID-19 symptoms.</p>	<p>Inform the school by telephone (option 1).</p>	<p>Your child feels better (after 48 hours if sickness or diarrhoea).</p>
<p>Someone in my household has COVID-19 symptoms.</p>	<p>DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL.</p> <p>Self-isolate with the whole household.</p> <p>Get a COVID-19 test for the most symptomatic household member.</p> <p>Inform the school immediately by emailing headteacher@stteilos.com.</p>	<p>Either: The test comes back negative.</p> <p>Or: 14 days have passed.</p>

<p>Someone in my household tests positive for COVID-19.</p>	<p>DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL.</p> <p>Self-isolate with the whole household.</p> <p>Inform the school immediately by emailing headteacher@stteilos.com.</p>	<p>14 days have passed.</p>
<p>Test, Trace and Protect inform me that my child has been in contact with somebody with COVID-19.</p>	<p>DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL.</p> <p>Self-isolate.</p> <p>Inform the school immediately by emailing headteacher@stteilos.com.</p>	<p>14 days have passed.</p>
<p>We have been abroad.</p>	<p>Do not take unauthorised leave during term time.</p> <p>If quarantine is required upon from return from destination, DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL.</p> <p>Self-isolate with the whole household.</p> <p>Inform the school immediately by emailing headteacher@stteilos.com.</p>	<p>14 days have passed.</p>
<p>We have received medical advice that my child must resume shielding.</p>	<p>DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL.</p> <p>Self-isolate.</p> <p>Inform the school immediately by emailing headteacher@stteilos.com.</p>	<p>You are provided with medical advice that your child can return.</p>
<p>My child is asked to remain at home to prevent an outbreak at school.</p>	<p>DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL.</p> <p>Self-isolate.</p> <p>Your child will receive three live broadcast lessons daily.</p>	<p>14 days have passed.</p>
<p>Any other reason.</p>	<p>If in doubt, DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL.</p> <p>Seek advice by emailing headteacher@stteilos.com.</p>	<p>You have received advice.</p>

APPENDIX 2: OAK NATIONAL ACADEMY

If your child is required to self-isolate, their learning will be delivered by the Oak National Academy. The Oak National Academy provides 10,000 lessons and resources covering a wide range of subjects, for all ages.

In the Oak National Academy 'classroom' each lesson is an hour long. They're delivered by a teacher with a pre-recorded video as well as quizzes, worksheets and creative activities. It's all easy to use, there's no login or password, you can access lessons on any device, and pupils only need materials they can find at home.

The academy can be accessed at <https://classroom.thenational.academy/>. Students can find lessons in the following ways:

 Subjects	Search by subject for the lessons that interest you and match your needs.
 Schedule	Follow the academy's weekly schedule of lessons.
 Search	Search for a specific topic to match your studies in school (recommended).
 Specialist	Find resources and lessons tailored to those with additional learning needs.

Teachers will be unable to set work for individuals who are self-isolating. However, your child can email their teachers directly for guidance about which topics to focus on in the Oak National Academy classroom.

If the school requires your child to self-isolate, in order to limit the transmission of COVID-19, they will receive three 'live' broadcast lessons from teachers at St Teilo's. This will apply to school closure for contact groups (usually a Year Group). Lessons will cover the full breadth of the curriculum and will be delivered on Microsoft Teams, which can be downloaded for free from Hwb.

If transmission rates increase, or if the teaching workforce is significantly depleted, the school will move to its half-day provision. This means that half of every class will attend school for three lessons in the morning, with the other half of the class attending for the same three lessons in the afternoon.