



25 September 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

LOCAL CORONAVIRUS RESTRICTIONS

The Health Minister has confirmed that coronavirus laws are being tightened across South Wales this weekend, including in the capital city, in response to a growing spread of cases. Local restrictions will come into force in Cardiff from 6pm on Sunday. These restrictions apply to us all and mean that we are unable to leave Cardiff without reasonable excuse. Importantly, we are also prevented from visiting friends and family inside each other's homes, which will be disappointing news for young people in particular.

Our families have endured a great deal since March and, just as we seemed to be getting back to some sense of normality, we are again being asked to play our part to protect the NHS and save lives. However, I remain optimistic. The measures being introduced are precautionary and preventative, designed to avoid a future – more restrictive – lockdown. Our response to these local restrictions might therefore be characterised by *measured concern*, not by panic or alarm. In the words of St Augustine, "We are saved by hope, so we are made happy by hope."

What, then, does this mean for our school? The analysis provided to the local authority by Public Health Wales shows that the spread in Cardiff is primarily within households and extended households. Only a very small number of schools have had more than one confirmed case of COVID and there have been zero cases to date at St Teilo's. Therefore, ***the school remains fully open to all pupils***. This means that your child should attend school on time, all day and every day. Our staffing levels remain very strong and we are able to continue to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all.

In the previous two weeks, we have forensically tracked the health of 131 individuals – none of whom have tested positive for COVID – and I would like to thank you all for acting so swiftly and responsibly when your child has been unwell. I have again included a reminder about what to do to manage COVID-related absence effectively (Appendix 1). Please do take your time to read this advice carefully so that we can continue to work preventatively together. I have also included a copy of instructions for your child to access learning from home, in the event that they are unwell, awaiting a COVID test or self-isolating (Appendix 2).

I am aware from my conversations with parents and carers that social media has been the recent cause of much worry and frustration. It is my experience that social media is largely unhelpful in separating COVID-fact from COVID-fiction and I would urge you not to pay too much attention to posts which, at best, lack context and, at worse, lack truth. We are fortunate to be housed in a building which can be physically 'zoned' to separate contact groups, giving us a significant advantage in maintaining COVID-security. Remember, you can read about

our approach to keeping children safe and learning here: <http://www.stteilos.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/COVID-Secure-Strategy-Issue-1-September-2020.pdf>. Also, you can read the Welsh Government's operational guidance to schools here: <https://gov.wales/operational-guidance-schools-and-settings-autumn-term-version-3.html>. Further, I have included some information entitled 'COVID-fact versus COVID-fiction' (Appendix 3) to provide clarity and confidence.

Finally, I wish to thank our students and staff for what has been an exceptionally happy, calm and enjoyable start to the school year in otherwise difficult circumstances; ours is a school brimming with joy and hope! As poet Emily Dickinson wrote, "Hope is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul - and sings the tunes without the words - and never stops at all." Amen!

Blessings,

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.

APPENDIX 3: COVID-FACT VERSUS COVID-FICTION

Should children be wearing face masks?

Unlike many schools, communal areas are not shared between contact groups at St Teilo's. This significantly reduces risk and we are lucky to be able to 'zone' our building to ensure contact groups do not mix. Even our break time picnic spaces are not shared!

Despite these measures, in busy spaces, face masks are still encouraged. We know that families have different views about this but, by wearing a mask, we provide reassurance to others. So, why not?

Face masks are strongly encouraged when entering and leaving the building. As our teachers are moving between lessons we have to rely on students, encouraged by their parents and carers, to make sensible decisions.

Is there social distancing in school?

We know that the vast majority of people want children in school all day, every day. This would not be possible if social distancing was maintained. Schools have to find other ways to manage and mitigate risk if they want to provide a full time and effective education.

At St Teilo's, all children belong to a 'contact group'. For younger children, contact groups are small and range from 30 to 60 people. For older children, contact groups are larger and range from 120 to 240 people.

Contact groups grow in size for children who follow specific programmes of study (for example, children who study GCSEs or A Levels). Every contact group stays within a 'zone' in the building.

How do children keep their hands clean?

We know that one of the best ways to prevent the spread of COVID-19 is to keep our hands clean and avoid touching our face. At St Teilo's we have three COVID-security rules summarised simply as 'Hands, Face, Space'.

Each contact group has its own 'zone' within the school building. There are sanitiser stations at each entrance and also in each break-out space. In addition, our Achievement Officers are present outside of classrooms throughout the day with a supply of sanitiser.

Each of our contact groups has their own toilet block, with sinks and hand soap available throughout the day. Of course, children should also bring their own supply of sanitiser to school.

Will my child gain all their qualifications?

St Teilo's operates 'contact groups', building 'zones' and a very carefully designed timetable that allows children to follow a broad curriculum with the complete range of qualifications.

Key Stages 4 and 5 (Years 10 to 13) continue to receive the curriculum in all its fullness. Key Stage 3 (Years 7 to 9) have only minor modifications, for example a reduction in some practical activities.

Despite the restrictions needed to keep our school COVID-secure, all children are able to enjoy a comprehensive and balanced curriculum.

Whatever happens this year with examinations, no child will be denied the qualifications they have worked hard for and deserve.

How can parents find information about how the school remains COVID-secure?

Keeping up with the latest public health advice can be bewildering. There is special advice that applies specifically to schools in Wales which is published by the Welsh Government. You can find this advice at <https://gov.wales/>

There is a lot of misinformation on social media which leads to worry and confusion. Do not believe untrustworthy sources. To find out about the practical implementation of government guidance at St Teilo's, visit <http://www.stteilos.com/news/>

If you have a question or concern, please email headteacher@stteilos.com. It is better to ask than to live with the disquiet of uncertainty. Be sure to read our COVID-secure strategy for information.

My child – or somebody in my family – has symptoms. What should I do?

If in any doubt, do not send your child to school. If your child (or anybody else in your family) has COVID symptoms, the whole family should immediately self-isolate. You must book a COVID test and remain at home for 14 days or until you receive a negative result, whichever is sooner.

If you are struggling to secure a COVID test, please email headteacher@stteilos.com and the school will assist you. You should keep the school updated at every stage by emailing headteacher@stteilos.com.

We all need to play our part to keep St Teilo's COVID-secure by acting honestly and responsibly.