



30 October 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

### **RESPONDING TO THE DEMANDS OF THE 'FIREBREAK'**

Last week, I wrote to you about the Welsh Government's intention to introduce a short, sharp 'firebreak' across Wales to help regain control of coronavirus. We are all now, once again, staying at home to protect the NHS and save lives.

Restrictions to our liberty, however necessary, bring about feelings of unease and apprehension. For children and young people, who have already experienced so much disruption to their education, this sense of uncertainty is even greater. I remain optimistic, however, that we will together forge a new path through these difficult times. To again quote humanitarian Helen Keller, "No pessimist ever discovered the secret of the stars, or sailed to an uncharted land, or opened a new doorway for the human spirit". And so, onwards.

#### ***Teaching and learning during the firebreak***

If your child is in Years 7 or 8, they will return to school on Monday 2 November 2020. Lessons will continue with only slight modifications to timetable. School transport will be running. If your child is self-isolating, they should remain at home until the end of their isolation period.

If your child is in Years 9, 10 or 11, they will be required to remain at home. The full curriculum will continue via webcasts at 9.00am, 11.00am and 1.30pm each day. Webcasts can be watched on a computer, laptop, tablet, smartphone or games console through a browser. Alternatively, your child can download the Microsoft Teams app via Hwb. Links to broadcasts will be found daily on Hwb.

If your child is in Years 12 or 13, they will be required to remain at home. The full curriculum will continue via online meetings at 9.00am, 11.00am and 1.30pm each day. Students can participate in meetings by downloading the Microsoft Teams app via Hwb. Invitations to online meetings will be sent directly.

Unless the Welsh Government make further changes to the 'firebreak' arrangements, all students will return to school on Monday 9 November 2020.

Your child can access Hwb by visiting <https://hwb.gov.wales/>.

If your child does not have access to appropriate technology to enable them to learn at home, please contact me directly at [headteacher@stteilos.com](mailto:headteacher@stteilos.com). The school has a very limited supply of additional devices which can be provided to those with greatest need.

## ***Tracked cases***

In the last week, there has been a significant rise in the number of positive cases of COVID tracked by the school. As always, I have included the latest figures for you in **Appendix 1**. We are seeing, perhaps unsurprisingly, a greater rise in transmission in the upper year groups which makes the task of contact tracing much more difficult. This has the potential to disrupt learning at a crucial time. **Therefore, if your child is in Year 10, 11, 12 or 13, I am taking the precaution of instructing ALL children to isolate for the remainder of the firebreak period.** By staying at home, we can be confident that the return to school on 9 November 2020 is as safe as it possibly can be.

Vigilance is essential in keeping our school open. I have included some advice about remaining alert in **Appendix 2**. It is critical that your child remains at home – and does not mix with family or friends from other households – at this precarious time. This is especially true of Halloween and Bonfire Night celebrations and I ask that parents and carers ensure their children remain inside. School staff will be patrolling the local community in partnership with neighbourhood policing teams to ensure compliance. Think of us, as the weather forecast does not look favourable!

## ***Keeping in touch***

During the COVID school closure period, I asked for feedback about the things we were doing well as a school and those things which we needed to improve upon. One of the key observations made by parents and carers was that the regular letters I had written had helped to make them feel informed and involved in the life and rhythm of St Teilo's. So, building on that success, I am introducing a regular electronic mailing to deepen our relationship even further. If you would like regular updates about the school by email, you can sign up by visiting <https://mailchi.mp/20ff38c25df0/your-latest-teamteilo-updates>.

Preparedness is, as I hope you have experienced, an important feature of my leadership of the school. This is particularly true as we begin to navigate the unpredictable and rapidly changing context of the winter months. Whatever the implications for schools of rising cases of COVID, I intend to plan for all eventualities! The greatest risk to children, I would suggest, is the continued disruption to their education by forced periods of self-isolation. To this end, I would like to hear from parents and carers about your priorities so that we can capture your views in our planning. I would be very grateful for a few minutes of your time in completing a short survey by visiting <https://forms.gle/K3bnmrP32qwBdeMX8>.

For the remainder of this firebreak period, we will again be available in times of need via our emergency helpline on [07568357563](tel:07568357563). Likewise, if your child experiences technical difficulties with remote learning, you should email [closurehelpline@stteilos.com](mailto:closurehelpline@stteilos.com).

I shall contact you again with an update after the ministerial announcement about assessment and examinations on 10 November 2020.

With every prayer,

Mr I Loynd  
Headteacher

# APPENDIX 1: TRACKED CASES

## Pupils

Tracked cases (pupils)	Impact on school	Total cases (as of 30/10/20)
Children who have had a negative COVID test result	Nil	101
Children who live with somebody who has had a negative COVID test result	Nil	110
Children who have had a positive COVID result but no close contacts	Nil	6
Children who live with somebody who has had a positive COVID result but no close contacts	Nil	22
Children who have been abroad and quarantined upon return	Nil	3
Children who have isolated as a precautionary measure	Nil	11
Children who have had a positive COVID result with close contacts	Partial closure and self-isolation	10

## Staff

Tracked case (staff)	Impact on school	Total cases (as of 30/10/20)
Staff who have had a negative COVID test result	Nil	7
Staff who live with somebody who has had a negative COVID test result	Nil	8
Staff who have had a positive COVID result but no close contacts	Nil	3
Staff who live with somebody who has had a positive COVID result but no close contacts	Nil	4
Staff who have had a positive COVID result with close contacts	Partial closure and self-isolation	1

## APPENDIX 2: STAY ALERT

Please be alert for any symptoms of COVID-19:

- A new or continuous cough
- A high temperature
- A loss of or change to sense of smell or taste

If your child develops any of these symptoms, even if they are mild:

- Book a test for them by phoning 119 or by visiting <https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test>
- Inform the Headteacher that they are unwell with COVID-19 by emailing [headteacher@stteilos.com](mailto:headteacher@stteilos.com)
- Your child should self-isolate for 10 days from when their symptoms started
- All other household members should isolate for 14 days from when your child developed symptoms
- Do not visit a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital but if you require medical advice please contact NHS 111 or telephone your GP; if there is a medical emergency phone 999
- Please follow the advice provided when your child receives their test result

To reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading, there are things that everyone in your family can do to help. These include:

- washing hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- using hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- washing hands as soon as they get home
- covering their mouth and nose with a tissue or sleeve (not their hands) when they cough or sneeze
- putting used tissues in the bin immediately and washing hands afterwards

*Further information on symptoms and self-isolation can be found here: <https://gov.wales/symptoms-and-self-isolation-contact-tracing>*

*Further formation on Test, Trace, Protect can be found here: <https://gov.wales/test-trace-protect-coronavirus>*

*General information on COVID-19 can be found here: <https://gov.wales/protect-yourself-others-coronavirus>*

*The COVID-19 online symptom checker can tell you if you need medical help and can be found here: <https://gov.wales/check-if-you-need-coronavirus-medical-help>*