



Monday, 20 April 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope you and your family had a pleasant Easter, and you are all safe and well.

This week is the start of the summer term, however as you know, school will not be reopening to all learners at this time. During these exceptional circumstances, we need to ensure that your children keep learning, feel safe and their wellbeing is a priority. This means that distance learning will continue.

Today a questionnaire has been sent to you asking for your feedback from both pupil and parent perspectives. We value your thoughts and will use this information to further plan and improve our distance learning offer, to ensure your child feels they are making progress and to evaluate how we can best help your child through this time.

Thank you to parents and pupils who have already completed this today. Provisional feedback shows pupils would like “greater contact with staff”, some are “overwhelmed with the balance and volume of work” and “too much work means struggling to meet deadlines”.

We have also asked our staff the same questions, gathering their feedback and their perceptions of our remote learning offer to date. Staff, like you, are learning. This is an example of staff feedback so far, “most students are engaged in the learning, only a couple here and there are not. Microsoft Teams is working well to communicate. Hopefully, the next few weeks will go relatively smoothly with the continuation of online learning. Feedback, as you said, is not identical to what we would do if we were physically with the children, but at the very least, learners can get some guidance and feedback using Teams, when we report back to them on areas to develop”.

In contrast to our continued distance learning, we need to plan for the reopening of our school. This will only happen when the science advises it is safe to do so but, even then, we cannot assume that it will be an immediate return to business as usual. We will work closely with our School Governors and the Local Authority. We have already begun to deliberate what a potential phased opening or start to school will look like, giving our full attention to the many factors we must consider, your child being the priority. I assure you that I will communicate the school’s intentions and plans nearer this time.



A few updates:

Over the last four weeks, the Cluster Childcare Hub at Thornwell Primary School has been running effectively. This provision attracts children with an age range from 4 years old to 11 years old, from families of our Key Workers. To date, primary staff along with SLT have been supporting the delivery of this provision. Over the next couple of weeks, Chepstow staff have been scheduled to deliver a programme. This will be a challenge for our secondary colleagues delivering to primary aged children, but I am sure they are up to it!

Behind the scenes, the Welsh Government continue to meet with stakeholders and are engaging with the profession to seek our views. In particular with examinations, submission of centre assessed grades, provision for candidates, the impact of school closure on the completion of NEA for learners in future years and preparing learners for GCSEs or A level examinations in summer 2021.

Finally, a special mention and thank you to:

- our DT department for producing PPE for both St David's Hospice Care and the NHS,
- our Science department for donating PPE; namely goggles, gloves and aprons to The Royal Gwent Hospital, and
- our staff who have been involved in the 5K fundraiser.

Please "get involved" and spread the word about our "Chepstow's Got Talent" fundraiser, details are on twitter and our web page.

Please take care and stay safe.

With best wishes

Matthew Sims
Headteacher