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Venerable Edward Morgan Catholic Primary School

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"LOVE AND SUPPORT IN ALL WE ARE TAUGHT."
"CARIAD A CHEFNOGAETH YM MHOPETH RHYDAN N'IN DDYSGLU."

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1st September 2020

Dear Parents,

It is now less than a week before we will be starting to welcome back the pupils for the start of the Autumn Term. I hope you have all managed to enjoy a happy and safe Summer with your families.

You will be pleased and no doubt relieved to know that I can now update you with our measures, protocols, and procedures for full reopening in September.

I recognise it has been a significant amount of time since the start of lockdown and some of our pupils have not been to our Venerable Edward Morgan Catholic Primary School (VEM) formally for five months. Whilst this will no doubt be a concern to parents, I am confident that many, if not all, children will return to VEM and quickly readjust and remember what it was like. I am sure there will be some pupils who might be feeling anxious about returning to VEM fearing that they will be behind and worried about what VEM may be like. Hence, firstly, I would like to reassure you all that when you do return next week.... VEM will be almost the same as before lockdown. All the children will be returning to VEM. Pupils will be taught the full curriculum as before lockdown. Pupils and Parents should expect the same VEM experience as before, but with just a few adjustments to ensure everyone's safety.

I have attached the main procedure plan for returning to VEM. It is very similar to the previous plan. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you need to ask any question regarding the new procedures.

The main differences are as follows: -

- There will be a staggered start for key Year Groups returning to VEM. This is to support VEM to carefully implement safety measures but also to allow us to support the pupils in these Year Groups with the transition into their key Years
- Reception, Year 3, and Year 6 will return on Monday 7th September
- Year 1, Year 2, Year 4, and Year 5 will join the other Year Groups and return to VEM on Wednesday 9th September 2020
- Nursery pupils will return on Monday 14th September, but will have induction sessions during the earlier week commencing Monday, 7th September
- Each Year Group will have a staggered drop off and collection time. This is to help stagger the number of adults congregating at VEM at any one time and to support VEM in keeping groups of pupils separate
- All pupils are to wear full VEM uniform (more details shown in the attached Procedure Plan)
- Pupils can now bring their own packed lunches to VEM. School dinners will also be available
- Collective worship will only take place in Classrooms and not in the Hall.
- VEM will continue to rigorously adhere to the guidance from the Welsh Government and our Local Authority.

At this moment in time, the guidance from the DfE has been similar to that issued before the Summer holidays. The generalised measures are:

- There is a requirement that people who are ill stay at home
- There should be robust hand and respiratory hygiene

Cyfeirir pob gohebiaeth at y Pennaeth Please address all communications to the Headteacher



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- There should be enhanced cleaning arrangements
- Active engagement with NHS Test and Trace
- Formal consideration of how to reduce contacts and maximise distancing between those in school wherever possible and minimise potential for contamination in as far as it is reasonably practicable

The most recent change, however, is the guidance regarding face coverings. The current advice from the Chief Medical Officer for Wales is that face coverings are recommended for all members of the public over 11 years old in indoor settings in which social distancing cannot be maintained, including schools and school transport.

As a school, we discourage the use of face masks for pupils in our VEM building. If parents wish their child to wear a mask on the journey to VEM, the mask must be removed and either placed in the bin provided or given to the parent, before entering VEM grounds.

Whilst I know many parents are ready for their children to return to VEM, there will undoubtedly be some reservations and anxiety about a full return and I hope any concerns or anxiety you may hold are alleviated by the robust Plans we have already put into place, alongside those detailed in this letter. Our main priority has always been and will continue to be, keeping children safe. I also understand that many of you will be worried about your child's academic progression and to what extent this has been hampered by VEM closures and Covid-19. Within the first weeks of VEM, we will be assessing every child from all Year Groups, to gain a full and comprehensive view of their academic position in both English and Maths. From there, all teachers will begin the task of bridging any gaps which may be present, whilst also immersing the children in their new learning. We will also be making sure that the wellbeing of all pupils is addressed and there will be opportunities for pupils to share their thoughts and feelings and well as time to talk and catch up with their friends.

I am in no doubt that the children will embrace the new term with the enthusiasm and eagerness that they always do and that with the skills, resources and expertise our children have available to them, there is no reason why any child's progress should suffer unduly because of time missed at VEM.

I would ask you now to read through the document attached to this letter in full, in order to gain a better understanding and awareness of all the measures, procedures and protocols put in place to protect both our VEM and the wider community. Staff will be in VEM for the rest of this week, working hard to prepare VEM for the return of all our pupils - if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact VEM either by telephoning the office or through email or Seesaw.

Please be aware that there will be no Breakfast Club, After School Club and Playgroup Plus facilities until Monday 14th September 2020. Information regarding how these facilities will be managed will follow shortly.

Thank you again for your continued support and both myself and the staff look forward to welcoming all our families back next week.

Kind regards

Mrs R Langley
Headteacher

