

8th January 2021

Dear parent/carer

This morning the First Minister announced further changes for schools in Wales. The key elements are summarised as follows:

- All children, with the exception of high priority vulnerable learners and the children of critical workers, will continue to access remote learning until the 29th of January. If rates of infection have not reduced by this time, schools will continue with remote learning until the February half-term break.
- Only high priority vulnerable children and the children of critical workers will have access to on-site education in schools along with learners undertaking essential exams and assessments until the 29th of January (or until the February half term if rates remain high).
- Schools are not more unsafe now or pose a higher risk for teachers and children. However, the new variant of Covid-19 is far more infectious and is leading to increased numbers of people falling ill and being hospitalised.
- For GCSE, AS and A level learners, a decision has been made to cancel the spring term assessments that were planned to take place between 22th February and 23rd April. Revised assessment arrangements for the award of these qualifications in summer 2021 will be put in place shortly and further information will follow in due course.
- Special school staff that provide intimate personal care for children with complex medical needs will be included as part of the priority list for vaccination to ensure that the most vulnerable are kept safe.

From the Monday the 18th of January, schools will continue to provide education for the children of critical workers on school sites. Eligibility has changed slightly and will only include the following groups of workers:

- Health and social care workers (including care home staff).
- Public safety (emergency workers) and national security workers.
- Education and childcare workers.
- Food and other necessary goods workers (please note this is an additional category)

If you have explored all possible childcare options and genuinely have no other alternative and have to work, then please click here and complete [the attached application form by 2pm on Monday the 11th](#) of your requirements for the week commencing the 18th of January. The current legislation only requires one parent to work in one of these outlined areas of work to access school based education.

Arrangements for high priority vulnerable learners will remain unchanged.

Please note, that places will be capped to ensure the health and safety of your child and school staff during this concerning period. The safest place for your child currently is at home but if essential, your school can provide education for vulnerable learners and the children of

identified critical workers in school. Where demand for places exceeds supply, requests will be prioritised based on need. If you have any concerns or exceptional circumstances, please raise these directly with your child's school. On-site provision is for education and not childcare, as school staff still have a responsibility to deliver education remotely to all children throughout the school day. In addition to this, they will continue to provide remote wellbeing support for those that require this.

Thank you for your continued patience and for supporting your child's learning during these very challenging times.

Many Thanks

Gaynor Davies

Director of Education and Inclusion Services.