



Radyr Comprehensive School

Ysgol Gyfun Radur

Heol Isaf, Radyr, Cardiff CF15 8XG
Telephone 029 20845100
Fax 029 20845101

Headteacher: Mr A.D. Williams B.Sc. M.Ed.
Email: enquiries@radyr.net
Website: <http://www.radyrcs.co.uk>

12 June 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: School reopening (Year 12)

I hope this letter finds you and your family well? On Wednesday 10 June, Welsh Government published initial guidance to support the safe reopening of schools over the coming weeks. The guidance includes information on learning, managing facilities, resources, PPE, cleaning and transport.

It is important to emphasise that Welsh Government sees the guidance as a working document. It will continue to evolve over the summer term into what will be the 'new normal' in September and at the same time ensuring it reflects the latest medical and scientific advice.

I know that some pupils, parents and staff will feel apprehensive. The health and wellbeing of learners and staff is – as always – my primary concern. However, we are working hard to plan for the return of our learners, ensuring we put the appropriate safeguards in place.

On 3 June, the Minister for Education announced that schools would increase operations from the 29 June until the 24 July, so all learners have the opportunity to 'check in, catch up and prepare for summer and September'. It is expected that all learners who are able to, have the opportunity to attend school for face to face contact time over the remainder of the summer term. In practice, this means that all schools, Radyr included, will be accommodating reduced number of learners each day, subject to capacity, while ensuring appropriate social distancing is in place.

As more learners return to the physical school environment, teachers will be operating in a very different context. I think it is important to state that this will continue for the foreseeable future. This has been described as a blended learning approach – a combination of face to face learning as well as remote learning. In recognition of this, staff have been tasked to develop new learning approaches, with a particular focusing on online learning, drawing on the full range of resources and professional expertise available, to meet the needs of our learners moving forward.

Determining on site capacity

We have been working closely with the Local Authority in determining how many learners and staff we can accommodate on site at any one time, while allowing for appropriate social distancing. The number of learners any school can accommodate will differ depending on the context of the school and setting. Capacity depends on a number of factors including: layout of rooms, the size of corridors, the number and size of larger shared rooms (such as halls and canteens) and available outdoor spaces.

In practice, it is expected that a school's capacity will mean that overall, at most, a third of learners will be present at any one time. However, Welsh Government recognises that schools need time to reach the maximum capacity they and the Local Authority believe is achievable and that they should look to build towards this over time. It is Welsh Government's expectation that in most schools, learners will have the opportunity to attend school on 3 occasions before the summer holidays.

From 29 June, we intend allocating **year 12 learners to one of the two timetabled sessions on a Monday each week**. The session times on each day are as follows:

- Session 1 (08:30 – 11:00)
- Session 2 (12:00 – 14:30)

Learners will be, in most cases, with their Form Tutor. There will be no movement between rooms: staff and learners will use the same room during their allocated session. This avoids risk of transmission from room to room and keeps the number of people each person comes into contact with to a minimum.

There will be no more than 10 pupils in each class during each session and seating arrangements have been designed to ensure appropriate distancing and to minimise physical contact. The rooms we have chosen, will only be used by one group of learners in one session on a given day and all rooms used will be deep cleaned in readiness for the following day. In most cases, we have chosen rooms that can be accessed directly from outside. Where classrooms are accessed by corridors, we have a one-way circulation system to keep the traffic of learners separate.

Later next week, you will receive further communication informing you of which session your child has been allocated to on their cohort day.

Keyworker requests

May I take this opportunity to thank the many parents who completed the survey earlier this week. For your information, the Local Authority has taken the decision to continue co-ordinating the keyworker requests for full day provision for their children. **More details and the relevant link to the Local Authority website will follow in due course.**

However, we have been advised that the children of keyworkers who wish to access the Radyr hub from the 29 June, will not be able to sit in the same room with members of their form group or form tutor. As a result, we have created an alternative facility due to the fact that keyworker children will be on site for the whole day. The provision will follow a similar pattern to the Cathays Hub, which will close on Friday 26 June i.e. learners will be expected to bring in work they have been set by their teachers to complete. **As with the Cathays hub, this provision is only available to pupils in year 7, 8 and 9.**

Catering Facilities

The Local Authority has decided that there will be no catering facilities on site before the summer break. Furthermore, learners will not be allowed to bring food on site. However, we advise that learners bring a bottle of water, as the water machines around the school will not be in use.

Toilet Facilities

We will ensure the use of toilets is managed to allow social distancing and that they are cleaned regularly throughout the day.

School Transport

As you will undoubtedly be aware, many of our learners travel to school on buses. The Local Authority School Transport Team is currently assessing the travel needs of our learners who travel on buses in order to determine the demand. While the School Transport Team wants to support the school as much as it can during this time, there are a number of restrictions they have to work under which will challenge normal practices. Current guidance dictates that the number of pupils that can be transported to school, based on vehicle size, are as follows:

- Vehicles up to 8 seats – 1 passenger;
- Vehicles with 8 to 16 seats – 2 passengers;
- Vehicles with 16 to 25 seats – 3 passengers;
- Vehicles with over 26 seats capacity will gradually increase passenger numbers depending on the number of rows of seats in the vehicle, e.g. a 70 seater coach with 13 or 14 rows of seats will be able to take 13 pupils.

As a result, the Local Authority is encouraging parents to transport their children to and from school wherever possible because they will not be able to cope with the same numbers on buses as they did prior to lockdown. There is also a greater risk of exposure to the virus travelling on buses.

Furthermore, to mitigate congestion at the school site we have been advised to consider drop off areas within a reasonable walking distance to the school, to in effect, create a 'park and stride'. **A decision has not yet been made regarding this, but as soon as one is, I will inform you.**

Uniform and equipment

To ease the burden on washing school uniform, I have taken the decision to allow learners to wear alternative suitable clothing up until the summer break. From September, normal uniform rules will apply, but this may be subject to change depending on the situation. The wearing of face masks will not be compulsory, but if learners feel more comfortable doing so, then that will be absolutely fine.

The Welsh Government guidance highlights that handling 'high touch' items (i.e. pens, pencils, rulers etc.) by multiple people should be minimised. **Therefore, learners will need to bring all their own equipment to school.**

Learners are also encouraged to bring their own IT devices (i.e. laptops, tablets, mobile phones) if possible.

Learners can only use their mobile phones in sessions when directed to by the member of staff. Where learners bring items from home with them, care should be taken to ensure that these are only handled by them, or if need be, appropriately cleaned.

Behaviour

I must impress upon learners the importance of behaving appropriately and sensibly while on site. Strict social distancing rules must be adhered to for the safety of all. Any learner found flouting these rules will be sent home immediately and will not be allowed to return until September.

In conclusion

I appreciate that there is much to consider in this letter. Please be reassured that we will do everything we possibly can to provide your child with a safe and caring environment in which to learn. I also want to thank you, as parents, for the way you have approached home schooling while juggling your own work commitments. I recognise that it has not been easy. My colleagues and I are really looking forward to returning to school, to create a sense of normality for your children, to support their wellbeing, and to develop a new way of blended learning. As we all work towards this 'new normal', staff at Radyr will do everything they possibly can to support all learners on their educational journey.

Many thanks for your ongoing support.

Yours sincerely



Mr A D Williams

Headteacher