

Claire Homard
Chief Officer (Education and Youth)
Prif Swyddog (Addysg ac Ieuenctid)



Your Ref/Eich Cy
Our Ref/Ein Cyf
Date/Dyddiad
Ask for/Gofynner am
Direct Dial/Rhif Union

CH
17th December 2021
Claire Homard
01352 704190

Dear Parents & Carers

School Arrangements – January 2022

The Welsh Government Minister for Education and the Welsh Language, Jeremy Miles, has today directed all schools in Wales to begin the spring term in January with two planning days.

This is to enable schools to evaluate their levels of workforce absence after the Christmas break and to give schools time to revisit their risk assessments to ensure they can operate safely. Schools have been advised to have the highest levels of Covid controls in place.

The Minister has also directed schools to be ready to switch at short notice to remote learning should the Covid situation deteriorate even further and the Welsh Government has to make the difficult decision to close schools for face to face learning. This is not a situation any of us would want to be in but we have to be prepared.

In Flintshire these planning days will be **Thursday January 6th and Friday January 7th 2022** and all pupils will return to school on **Monday 10th January 2022**. Where schools had training days planned on these dates, Welsh Government has directed them to be moved back later into the school year. Schools will update parents when the new dates for training days have been agreed.

There will be no provision for childcare or for vulnerable learners on these two days so parents and carers will need to make arrangements.

County Hall, Mold. CH7 6ND
www.flintshire.gov.uk
Neuadd y Sir, Yr Wyddgrug. CH7 6ND
www.siryfflint.gov.uk



The Council welcomes correspondence in Welsh or English
Mae'r Cyngor yn croeso sawl gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg neu'r Saesneg

Pupils who are entitled to free school meals will receive a payment for these two days and this will be automatically added to the direct payments being made by the Council over the Christmas holidays. School transport will not operate until Monday 10th January.

Individual schools will be in touch with parents to remind them of their arrangements for the 10th January, including any new safety measures for the start of term.

Welsh Government is now recommending that lateral flow testing is increased to three times a week rather than two, starting in January. For secondary aged pupils and the education workforce, it is strongly recommended that three lateral flow tests are undertaken before returning to school in January e.g. on the Monday, Wednesday and Friday of the week beginning January 3rd, ahead of pupils returning on the 10th January. Schools will confirm their testing schedules directly to parents. Face coverings will continue to be strongly recommended in classrooms and indoor areas unless individuals are exempt.

It is important that no-one with Covid-19 symptoms attends school and they should book a PCR test.

I appreciate that this decision by Welsh Government will cause concern and create challenges for parents and carers but it is essential that we are prepared for whatever we may face in January.

In the meantime, I wish you and your families a safe and peaceful Christmas.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "SA Hemard". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "S" and "H".

Chief Officer, Education & Youth