



ST CYRES SCHOOL

Strive Together Challenge Yourself Realise Everyone can Succeed

Mr P Lewis, BSc (Hons)
Acting Headteacher/Prifathro Dros Dro

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to inform you of some very important changes to arrangements as we move forward in these uncertain times.

Changes to school-based childcare arrangements

As you will be aware, the Coronavirus pandemic has resulted in Welsh Government being required to make rapid decisions and changing the way in which schools operate. The school and Local Authority continue to follow national guidance.

Over the last week, all schools across the Vale of Glamorgan have provided childcare for children of key workers from their own schools. This has been the preferred model of the local authority and schools and I suspect parents and carers too. However, we now realise this is not sustainable. As the Coronavirus progresses, many schools will struggle to staff a childcare provision due to staff sickness and self-isolation. So, in working with a group of headteachers, the Local Authority have decided to move towards a hub model in line with other local authorities across Wales.

Whilst the number of sites offering the provision is fewer, the hub model is based on local school clusters working together to deliver the childcare provision for their area. This will enable them to redeploy and rota teaching and support staff to keep the hubs open for a sustained period and provide the best possible quality of provision given the circumstances.

14 hubs will be available across the Vale of Glamorgan, made up of schools that are geographically as close as possible to each other. With 14 hubs, this will mean that the number of pupils attending will remain relatively low to ensure we are able to maintain safe social distancing measures. All hubs will provide childcare for households where both parents/carers are key workers or for single family households where the parent/carer is a keyworker. Childcare provision for these families will operate from 7am to 7pm, 7 days a week, and will provide breakfast, lunch and an evening snack to all children. A centrally operated admissions process for parents who are key workers will be introduced and children will be allocated to an appropriate hub. Details of this will be made available on the Vale of Glamorgan website www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk very soon. **This new hub arrangement will operate from Wednesday 1st April so if you require this service, urgent action is required.**

It remains the case that the hub childcare provision should only be used as a **last resort** where all other options have been exhausted by parents and carers, and wherever possible, children and young people should remain in the safety of their own homes. The wellbeing and safety of both staff and pupils is absolutely paramount in all our thinking.

Email: contact@stcyres.org



Distinguished
School



Changes to the distance learning approach

Thank you for all of the positive feedback I have received about the work and activities that teachers have been setting through Google Classroom. As a school, we are committed to providing work for your children to ensure that they continue to progress their learning despite the current suspension of formal education.

Over the last week, we have learned a number of lessons about distance learning, much of which has been based on parental feedback as well as feedback from teachers. In light of this, we have developed a new framework which teachers will be adhering to from next week onwards. This framework recognises the pressures of trying to educate your children at home, especially when you have more than one child, you are trying to work from home or indeed you are a key frontline worker.

Naturally, it is very important that this distance learning needs to be a positive experience for your children in order to encourage them to complete it, with as many engaging and varied activities as possible. Furthermore, we do not want to inundate your children with work as this is an opportunity for them to indulge in wider educational activities such as reading, supporting younger siblings and engaging in new and existing hobbies.

For consistency, from **Monday 20th April** (after the Easter holidays), all work set will use the following format:

- An outline schedule will be placed on Google Classroom to cover the next 2 weeks activities for *each subject*. This will allow you to see what work your child is expected to complete in the next 2 weeks to help you schedule this in with your other family commitments.
- Any individual deadlines within that 2 week schedule will be made clear. This may apply in subjects where your child would have several lessons across a normal 2 week timetable.
- An indication of how long the pupil would be expected to work on each task.

Where possible, work submitted will be marked by the class teachers. Please appreciate that this may not be the detailed marking they would have if the children were in school, but it is important that recognition and feedback are provided when appropriate.

Where appropriate, some teachers may wish to make use of electronic face-to-face contact as part of their distance learning provision for your child. This might utilise tools such as Facetime or Zoom and might be done on a one-to-one basis or in small groups. I have attached a guidance document for parents to ensure that this is a safe and productive activity for both teachers and your child.

I hope that this framework will provide you with more structure and guidance in the forthcoming weeks. This situation is far from perfect and I am sure that we will all continue to learn lessons in the weeks to come. However, please be assured that the staff are available through Google Classroom to support your child and I would encourage you to make use of this if you need further support.

St Cyres Inspection Report

The final report from the school inspection which was conducted in January 2020 can now be found at:

https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/www.estyn.gov.wales/files/documents/St%20Cyres%20Comprehensive%20School_0.pdf

The report has highlighted many strengths of the school and in the report summary, it describes our school as ‘a caring and inclusive school where the wellbeing of all pupils and staff is supported well’.

The Leadership Team, staff and Governors and I are currently working on the recommendations of the report and drawing up an action plan in accordance with Estyn procedures.

Contacting the school

As our teaching staff and LSAs will now be operating a rota for the new Local Authority hub arrangement from Wednesday 1st April, there will be very limited presence at the school site. Reception will be open from **9am until 10am** on Monday to Friday, starting after the Easter holidays on **20th April 2020**. If you have any urgent queries, please telephone the school during these times and we will do our very best to help you.

Yours sincerely,

Mr P Lewis

Acting Headteacher