

REOPENING OF SCHOOLS IN WALES

COMMUNICATION 2

05/06/20

To our Dear Westwood Family,

I really do hope you are well! I will start by thanking you all for your support and patience, and what's more, your trust in Westwood.

As you know from my email on Wednesday, the Welsh Education Minister Kirsty Williams, announced that all schools in Wales will reopen on June 29th for 4 weeks, closing for the summer break on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> July. This is 1 week longer than was planned, meaning the traditional Summer Holiday will now be 5 weeks not 6. The term will end on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> July. As you might imagine, there will now be a vast amount of work and planning that will need to be actioned before this can take place at Westwood. At school level, we still have received no further information than yourselves from the Ministers address. **As promised, I will be sending out firm information next week on the Westwood offer for our children in relation to more guidance when we receive it but I felt it was right to give you a summary of what was issued on Wednesday, as it may help answer some questions you may have.**

KEY POINTS WERE:

- Schools open June 29th - July 24th
- Additional week holiday October half term
- All Year groups will get SOME face to face time with their teachers (if they are able to return to school) within this 4-week window, to complement on going home learning.
- This is an opportunity to 'Check In and Catch Up before Summer and September!
- It is to prepare for a new normal
- Phased and staggered days, with no more than 1/3 of pupils at any one time dependent on school settings and facilities
- Expected that home / distance learning will continue into September and beyond for all year groups
- Staff and pupils who have received 'shielding' letters and pupils who live with a parent who has received a 'shielding' letter, are not expected to return in the Summer Term
- Social distancing will need to be adhered to
- Strict health screening and hygiene procedures in place for pupils and their households
- National guidance of expectations to be provided to schools next week
- Parental choice to send children to school during the 4-week opening window based on what school can offer

I have no further firm information that I can share with you, other than to ask you to understand, and be prepared for the fact, that school will **NOT BE AVAILABLE TO ALL PUPILS on a FULL TIME BASIS FOR 4WEEKS.** Opening of Westwood will only happen on a limited, staggered basis for a greatly reduced number of pupils at any one time, as the minister wants to give all groups this opportunity to check in and catch up with their peers before summer and September.

I know that some parents thought they would be sending their children back for a full four weeks but sadly not, and there is nothing any school in Wales can do to change this given the current Covid 19 situation. It was made clear by the Minister on Wednesday, that it is optional for your child to return on the date/s given by the school, and these dates will be at some point from Monday 29<sup>th</sup> June.

We will now begin to plan a safe return for us all, pupils and staff, and will share this with you next week as soon as we can. This will include surveying you, our Westwood Family, to find out if you will be willing to send your child into school based on what Westwood can offer safely, in line with the final guidance when received.

Both for the remainder of the summer term and in September, the majority of learning will need to continue at home. We all now need to be prepared for, and expect that full time, 5 days a week education at school, is not sadly returning anytime soon.

I know you will all have many questions around the announcement, and how this will impact and effect you and your children. Until we ourselves have further guidance and information that we can share with you, we are not currently in a position to be able answer or respond to individual questions and concerns until we ourselves have further information. Thank you for your support with this.

Whereas we are all very pleased to learn that we will be returning to Westwood soon, this will not be a return to the school we closed in March. We are now facing an immense amount of work and planning before we can safely open our doors to our staff and pupils on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> June. I really do appreciate you will be torn and will want clarity soon- please rest assured, I will always be open and give you the information as soon as I am able to, so you can make the best decisions for your family and your circumstances.

Thank you for your patience and understanding. I will update you further next week as promised, once we have safe plans and procedures in place. Rest assured, you will be presented with a carefully considered offer with safety and wellbeing for all at its heart.

Kindest regards and please stay safe,

Mrs Williams and Team Westwood