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Your Ref./Eich Cyf.

Contact:/Cysylltwch â: Lynn Phillips

Date:/ Dyddiad: 4th December 2020



Cyngor Bwrdeisdref Sirol

Blaenau Gwent

County Borough Council

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to inform you that Blaenau Gwent Council has today made a decision, in full consultation with Headteachers, to move to remote learning for pupils from Thursday 10th December 2020.

This means that whilst school sites will physically close at the end of the school day on Wednesday, 9th December, schools will continue to provide high quality teaching and learning through digital technologies and platforms, which I am sure you are all familiar with by now. Head-teachers are clear that this approach is the best way to ensure that learning can continue, and indeed, be enhanced until the end of this term.

This was not an easy decision to make, but it is a decision that I believe is in the best interests and well-being of the school community. We are aware that many families are considering the impact on their children attending school until the end of term and this is understandable as they seek to reduce contact at this time. Sadly, COVID-19 cases in the County Borough continue to be amongst the highest in Wales, and we are seeing ever increasing numbers of pupils and staff needing to self-isolate across the school estate.

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The Council welcomes correspondence in Welsh and English and we will communicate with you in the language of your choice, as long as you let us know which you prefer. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to any delay.

Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg a Saesneg a byddwn yn cyfathrebu gyda chi yn eich dewis iaith, dim ond i chi rhoi gwybod i ni pa un sydd well gennych. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn creu unrhyw oedi.



It has been such a difficult year for everyone and reducing the risk of self-isolation over the Christmas period, which would mean not being able to spend precious time with close friends and family as you have planned, is at the heart of this decision. We are confident that schools have robust home learning arrangements in place and teaching staff will continue to work to deliver teaching and learning remotely until the end of term, and provide support with your child's learning. We will be making arrangements for families eligible for Free School Meals to receive direct payments for this period.

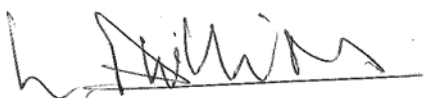
Our school staff have worked so hard to support learners and their families throughout this very difficult year, both during full lockdown and when schools re-opened in September. They have had to adapt quickly on many different ways of working, and I thank them for their continued commitment to our children and young people.

Thank you also to parents and carers for being supportive of our schools and of education, and all the changes that we have had to bring in this term in order to try to keep everyone as safe as possible, whilst continuing to deliver the best learning experiences for our pupils.

Your school will be in touch to provide more information about the learning arrangements.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your families a very happy and safe Christmas.

Best Wishes



Lynn Phillips
Corporate Director for Education
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council