



Cyngor Sir Powys / Powys County Council
Neuadd Y Sir / County Hall
Llandrindod Wells
Powys LD1 5LG

12th January 2022

Dear Parents/Carers,

Happy new year. I hope you have had a good break over Christmas with your families. As we return to school after the break, I am pleased to announce that all schools across Powys have had sufficient staffing capacity to be able to open at the start of term. You will be aware that Welsh Government made the decision for all Local Authorities to have two planning days at the start of this term. This is because it is envisaged that through the month of January and indeed up to half term, staff shortages may become an issue meaning schools need to be able to provide blended learning immediately. Staff shortage includes transport staff, catering staff, cleaning staff, teaching assistants, administrative staff and teachers, all of whom are essential staff to keep schools open and running safely. If schools need to close and provide blended learning, childcare will continue to be provided for key workers' children and for vulnerable learners at their own school.

We are monitoring the situation on a daily basis and will be continuing to support schools so that when staff shortages become apparent schools are able to make the necessary arrangements. Schools will continue to work within the national framework which is in place in all schools and provides guidance on the day to day running of each school. It is therefore possible that some schools will need more measures in place than others depending on the number of positive cases in the school in line with the school's risk assessment. This may mean some schools have to close and provide blended learning whilst others remain open for face-to-face teaching.

However, there are some measures that we advise should be consistent throughout the Local Authority in line with the new framework. We strongly encourage all staff and all pupils from year 7 upwards to take LFD tests three times a week on a Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday evenings. You will be able to collect the tests from libraries, pharmacies throughout Powys or order them online.

It is also an expectation that there are good hygiene regimes such as handwashing regularly throughout the day for all staff and pupils both at home and at school. This will help prevent the spread of the virus.

We are advising schools that Open evenings and Parents' evenings take place remotely and that sporting fixtures are postponed until the end of January. We will review this position at the end of January 2022. Once again we thank you for your co-operation.

Clr Phyl Davies
Cabinet Portfolio for Education and Property

Lynette Lovell
Director of Education