



Blackwood Comprehensive School

Ysgol Gyfun y Coed Duon

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Ymdrech I Drechu – Strive To Succeed

Dear Parent/Carer and Pupils

20th April 2020

I hope you managed to have a good Easter break. As we enter our fifth week of school closure, I wanted to update you with key information and to congratulate our pupils on how well they have been working so far. It is certainly a very strange time and I am immensely proud of them, of their resilience and of how they have coped with the challenges that they are currently facing. I would like to take the opportunity to thank our staff for their hard work in preparing resources and lessons which are enabling learning to continue whilst we are closed, and also to thank our parents and carers for your support in helping to deliver this home learning. I know that this can be difficult.

As we move into a new term we have had the opportunity to reflect on the way home learning will continue over the coming weeks. Before Easter home learning was structured by requesting that pupils complete work according to their timetable, but feedback has told us that many are finding this difficult to manage and is causing some anxiety. From this week onwards, pupils will now be set one piece of work per subject, per week. These pieces of work will have a deadline of at least one week or longer, but pupils will be able to contact staff to request help and guidance as usual. I hope this will make the work more manageable and cause less stress to all.

Whilst it is important to carry on with learning at home, it is also vital that we keep fit, active and healthy. Mrs Griffiths and her wellbeing team have been posting wellbeing tips and information that we hope you are finding useful. They have also been contacting families to provide further help when needed. We want to continue supporting our families during these challenging times, so if you and your family need help, please keep an eye on our website, Facebook and Twitter accounts, or get in touch via our school email address BLKCA@caerphilly.gov.uk and we will get back to you as soon as we can.

As you are aware, summer examinations have been cancelled and we have now received information from Qualifications Wales and the Welsh Education Minister, Kirsty Williams, about how grades will be awarded for GCSE qualifications. We will be asked to send two pieces of information for each GCSE qualification, based on what teachers know about pupils' work and performance. These are:

- the grade teachers believe pupils were most likely to get if teaching, learning and exams had happened as planned;
- the order of learners, by performance, within those grades.

Teachers will consider a range of evidence such as class and homework, results in assignments and mock exams, any non-exam assessments and pupils' general progress during their course. This information will allow the WJEC and other exam boards to gather and compare grades across schools. This will ensure that pupils are not advantaged or disadvantaged because some schools are more generous than others when making those judgements. I am also pleased to confirm that the results' day for GCSE pupils in Wales will be as originally scheduled, on Thursday 20th August 2020. As the way forward becomes clearer and we move out of our current lockdown, we will also look at how we will celebrate year 11 pupils' time with us at Blackwood Comprehensive School.

In the meantime, take care, stay at home and stay safe.

Kind regards

Jane Wilkie

