

Blaendulais News

"Making a Difference"

Croeso Nol! Welcome Back!

Most of us have grown up with tales of yesteryear and stories that we could barely believe were true... I think we'll be telling our grandchildren about the past few months!

On Friday, 20th March 2020 all schools across Wales were instructed to close due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. At that time, I don't think anybody could quite comprehend or believe that we may not return to school before the summer holidays - I for one thought, 'give it a week or two and we'll be back!' As we return for the final few weeks of term for 'Catch Up, Check-In' sessions, it is incredible to think we have been away from school for fourteen weeks.

You will be aware that for the vast majority of the time, the school has either been repurposed as a childcare 'Hub', or has joined with neighbouring schools to be part of a larger 'Hub' in Cwmnedd Primary, Glynneath. Can I take this opportunity to thank Ms Harwood, and all of the staff at Cwmnedd Primary, for making us feel so welcome and part of something special during the past few months. Similarly, can I thank Blaendulais Chair of Governors, Cllr Steve Hunt, the Local Authority and Welsh Government Education Secretary, Kirsty Williams, for their support - it has been an incredibly difficult time, but we have been supported throughout.

INSET Days - Tuesday, 1st and Wednesday, 2nd September. Pupils return Thursday, 3rd September.

ATTENDANCE

Let's work together to reach our attendance target of 95%! In school = Achieving!

PARTNERSHIPS

Positive relationships are key to successful futures for our children.

TEAMWORK

Let's build a team ethos by wearing uniform to school - it makes a real difference!

Microsoft Teams



During 'Lockdown' we made the decision to base all of our output on the school website - this had many initial benefits, but it doesn't quite enable us to make the most of the tools we have at our disposal.

All pupils have now been invited to join their classmates, and teachers, in 'Microsoft Teams' - this is a wonderful resource found within Hwb (inside the Office 365 tab) or by downloading the app.

Here you'll find your work and 'CICU' meetings with your teachers!

Download it now!

So now we turn to the most important people - our wonderful boys and girls... I have heard tales of a 'Lost Generation', 'Pupils missing out on their education...', 'Falling behind' and so on. Whilst it cannot be argued that we have lost weeks of schooling - what we have lost in time being in school, we have gained in the form of incredible experiences we may never have again - **newly found pet frogs being cared for on driveways, hedgehog homes being built (with a real hammer!) in the back garden, never-ending bike rides, days on the beach, homemade haircuts, baking cakes, clapping for our NHS heroes, sunny days in the pool (the 'biggest' in your street) and endless cwtches with those we love.** I believe we may have lost a few months of school, but we have gained so much more.

Finally, a massive 'Thank You' to our staff. Overnight they 'repurposed' the entire school from a place of education, to a 'childcare' facility for Key Worker families and identified learners. Giving up their Easter Holidays and half terms to provide care and continue to support our children. I sincerely hope you have enjoyed the website based work, videos and assemblies - 1.7+ thousand views on YouTube makes me think you did!

So now we move onto a new chapter - 'Catch Up, Check-in' before the summer and September'. Again, we have been so impressed with the girls and boys who have joined us this week - they have been absolute stars. If you would like your child to rejoin us before the summer (if it is even for one week), complete the form on our website's main page - <https://blaendulais-primary-school.j2bloggy.com>. The staff will be so pleased to see you!

As we look toward September, at this moment in time, we are unaware of what school will look like. However, as soon as we know, we'll let you know! Thank you once again for your support during this time... it'll certainly be one to tell the grandkids about!



IN OUR THOUGHTS...

During this period, many within our community have suffered illness, heartache and loss. It has been difficult for the staff - we have been unable to support and help the children like we normally would - an arm around the shoulder, time in 'Rainbow Rangers', a chat in the office, or a simple cwtch. However it is nothing compared to the challenges some have gone through. Please know we are always there for you, and your children - if we can help in anyway, just ask.

GP