



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot  
Neath Port Talbot Council

Dyddiad/ Date	7 <sup>th</sup> January, 2021
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Ebost/ Email	
Cyswllt/ Contact	Aled Evans
Eich cyf / Your ref	
Ein cyf/ Our ref	AE/KW

Dear Parent / Carer,

You will be aware that the Welsh Government has agreed that all schools should move to online learning until January 18th.

Schools will remain open for children of critical workers and vulnerable learners; our special schools will also remain open, subject to risk assessment, as will our Learning Support Centres. Please discuss individual circumstances with relevant head teachers.

Schools remain safe settings. They operate under scrutinised risk assessments and apply robust control measures based on the four key protective behaviours of hand washing, social distancing, ventilation and the wearing of face coverings. These behaviours remain effective in reducing the spread of the new variant of the Covid-19 virus if adhered to correctly.

However, we also know that education settings being open can contribute to wider social mixing and given that infection rates remain high in NPT, we welcome the decision to migrate to online learning.

Our schools have prepared well for online delivery and we are confident that the provision will be stimulating and relevant, building on your children's previous learning.

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[www.npt.gov.uk](http://www.npt.gov.uk)

We would strongly urge all parents / carers to engage with schools in order that their children fully benefit from home provision or, where applicable, access learning at their school setting.

Educational provision will continue and learning will be scheduled on a daily basis modelled on normal practice. We strongly advise that all pupils prepare for their school day as they would normally and to attend their remote learning provision in the exact same way as they on a school day.

We expect the Welsh Government to review its decision over the next week or so and in light of decisions already taken by other UK governments, it is reasonable to expect that this arrangement could be extended. It is therefore vitally important that remote learning is not viewed as a short gap arrangement and all pupils should participate in this provision in order to continue with and progress their education.

Your children's teacher will still be guiding their learning at this time. Please follow what the school is setting. You should speak to your children's school first if you want additional help and advice about how to support their learning. Your children's teachers know them well and will want to help, for example with advice about:

- the best way to support your children's learning
- how to access help for their specific needs
- what to do if you or your children have questions about their work
- what to do if you or your children are feeling overwhelmed about school work
- what to do if you do not have access to a suitable internet-connected device to access online learning activities from home (help is available to support families via your school or local authority).

Your children's school should always be your first point of contact and if you are contacting your children's school or teacher you should use the communication channels your school has set up for this.

We expect schools to be delivering a mix of learning opportunities, which will include where relevant, recorded and / or live lessons, a range of digital communication and sign-posting to learning resources. We expect schools to contact pupils individually where this is deemed necessary and to discuss progress in learning with both pupils and parents / carers.

The effectiveness of this provision will be measured, in significant part, by the extent pupils engage with it. Pupils have a key part to play in making this experience meaningful.

We acknowledge that these are challenging times in our lives. However, learning must continue to be a key priority for children and young people. These arrangements can be made to work effectively and can benefit our pupils - your children.

Whilst we all have a responsibility to stay at home wherever possible and adhere to the restrictions placed by Welsh Government to suppress infection rates, we also have a responsibility to ensure that learning continues to light even our darkest of days.

Yours sincerely,



**Aled Evans**  
***Director of Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning,***  
***Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council***