



Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref

To: Headteachers/FE Principals

19th October 2020

Dear colleague

I am committed to letting you know as soon as possible any decisions on COVID-19 affecting the education sector.

Over the weekend, the Cabinet met to continue our discussions about a time-limited “fire-break” – a short, sharp, shock to turn back the clock, slow down the virus and buy us more time.

We met again this morning and have today reached the difficult decision to introduce a two-week fire-break, starting at 6pm on Friday this week and ending after midnight on 9 November.

As the virus has taken hold, we have said repeatedly that children would be our top priority if further restrictions are needed.

As a result, we have looked to keep disruption to education to a minimum.

- Primary schools and special schools will re-open as normal after half term on Monday 2 November.
- Secondary schools will be open for children in years 7 and 8, whilst other pupils will continue their learning from home for that week.
- Those sitting GCSEs and University entrance exams in November will be able to do so at school/college.
- College students will also continue their learning from home for the week beginning 2nd November.
- We will be issuing guidance for the period which will include minimum expectations for learning. This will include teachers delivering online lessons from the classroom.
- Free school meals arrangements have already been put in place for half term and will continue for pupils in year nine and above for a second week.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Restricting the numbers of pupils in schools and colleges is a contribution of the wider national effort.

I know that schools and colleges have learnt lessons from the first lockdown and put in arrangements in case of disrupted learning this term.

We will work with you, our local authorities and our unions this week to provide you with further guidance.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kirsty Williams". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "K".

Kirsty Williams AS/MS

Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education