



# Eastern High / Ysgol Uwchradd y Dwyrain

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Head teacher: Armando Di-finizio

30th March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

We've now had one week of closure as a school and I would like to say a sincere thank you to all of the offers of support and the patience you have shown, as both families and staff, as we adjust to a whole new way of working and communicating. We don't know how long this current way of working will last and so it's important we establish purposeful routines and develop clear systems as a school community in order to emerge from the other side of this ready to continue working and learning in school.

Last week was a very busy one for us, developing and delivering our online learning, ensuring regular communications have been maintained with many of our students and families, organising free school meals and running the provision for the children of Key Workers. Maintaining the technology to ensure our communication channels remain open and the school continues to function in the background has also been a major task for us.

I'm sure as parents, many of you have had a busy and demanding week also, adjusting to the demands of remote working and having your children at home. I have three children (two in their early 20's and an 18 yr old) and they are all back living with us for the duration of this - apart from sending the food bills through the roof, the house is suddenly in a mess and they are beginning to become bored! That's why it's so important for us to develop routines.

I cannot therefore stress enough the importance of pupils maintaining a routine when it comes to the online learning we are providing. This week the numbers participating have not been as high as I would have liked. I can understand there will be initial excitement for some with regards to school being closed, but it will become increasingly important to keep minds focused on learning and organising the day around the normal school timetable. Doing this will hopefully help to give some structure in what are uncertain times. I have said the same to staff also: we need purpose in our lives otherwise we will gradually become lax and lose our work ethic. It's important also, therefore, that our staff continue to maintain a focus on the lessons they deliver on a daily basis, and also on the roles/tasks other staff have been set.

As previously communicated, work is being set via Google Classrooms, following the usual timetable. For example, if a child has English Lesson 1 on a Monday, then they should be logging on for that lesson in the appropriate Google Class. Their teacher will be monitoring the work done and marking it regularly. There will also be opportunities to chat online with the teacher. Please encourage your child to participate in these classes. We will be sending out letters after Easter informing you if your child is not participating. There are also other activities for pupils to look out for in the coming weeks.

If your child does not have access to a device or the internet, please let us know via the [info@easternhigh.org.uk](mailto:info@easternhigh.org.uk) email address or call the school and we will provide written work. Anyone who

is having trouble logging in, should also communicate with us in the same way and we will try to resolve the problem.

If you are concerned about your child's welfare and feel you need some support or advice, please also use the above contact methods leaving your name and the name of your child. Again, we will get back to you as soon as possible. Alternatively see the document '**Guidance for Pupils and Parents**' on our website, where the email addresses of our safeguarding and wellbeing team can be found.

I'm sorry for those key workers who were hoping to use our provision in school next week, but as you are aware the Council has centralised this and the provision for Eastern High will now be at Cathays High School. You can find out how to register at: [www.cardiff.gov.uk/keyworkerchildcare](http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/keyworkerchildcare)

One group I have particularly felt sorry for is our Year 11s and I have written to them separately. Many of them have been working so hard, preparing for their exams and completing their coursework. We were looking forward to a really good set of results this year. We will let Year 11 know as soon as possible when their predicted grades (based on prior attainment, coursework and teacher prediction) are finalised by the exam boards and Qualifications Wales. In the meantime, I am working with the main Post 16 providers to see if they will put some provisional course offers out to pupils. If they do this then between us and the Post 16 providers, we can give some meaningful work for Year 11 in preparation for their Year 12 courses. And there will be a Prom! I don't know when yet, but we will put one on at some point.

With regards to Free School Meals, the council is working on introducing some kind of voucher system, but until then, you can continue to pick up free school meals at the front of the school between 12.30pm and 1.30pm.

Please do keep looking at our website for updates over the coming weeks. I am sure that there will still be many unanswered questions from families about the coming months, but please do bear with us as we work our way through arrangements and trust that we will communicate any developments in as timely a way as possible.

In addition to the work we are doing now. We are looking for ways to ensure we are fully staffed for September and also how to ensure we have a smooth transition for the Current Year 6 into Year 7. Most important over the coming weeks is planning for our re-opening. We don't know when this will happen, I don't imagine after Easter, but possibly Whitsun Half term? Even Whitsun is a long time off and as mentioned above, it will be all too easy to fall out of the practice of learning (and working) and so it will be important that as a school we have in place a really good induction provision for both staff and students (as well as logging on to the online work).

Thank you for taking the time to read this. We will write to you regularly and as mentioned above please do keep looking at the website for any updates regarding the school. In the meantime, please stay safe, look after your families.

Best wishes



Armando Di-Finizio

Headteacher