



Dear Parent/Guardian

Thank you to everyone who responded to the parental questionnaire. We have shared a similar questionnaire with pupils and as we move forward we will analyse the comments further, but I attach a summary of the questionnaire results and what we will do in response.

## **Parents questionnaire findings**

### **Technology**

The technology has worked for most, and where problems have arisen these have been solved for almost everyone. Six parents reported ongoing problems with software or hardware. If we can help with this, please contact either your progress and wellbeing leader or [ymholiadau@penweddig.ceredigion.sch.uk](mailto:ymholiadau@penweddig.ceredigion.sch.uk) and we'll see what we can do.

### **Live lessons**

Most think there are enough live lessons (62%) with some (28%) thinking more are needed. 10% think there are too many of these. The answers are different for different years so this has been considered as we make our plans – or arrangements treat KS3 groups differently from KS4 and KS5 due to external 'exam' pressures, and our changes for each will reflect responses from each group of parents. The overwhelming majority judge the level of challenge to be appropriate.

### **Independent tasks**

Almost everyone judged the independent useful tasks to be helpful or very helpful. Most thought that there were enough of them but a minority wanted more. The general comments stated that timing can be a problem - many would prefer to receive these at the beginning of the week and plan their activities so that they can complete them around their lessons and / or other activities.

### **Teaching time**

In a typical day in school pupils receive 5 hours of education, and during the past week a national guide has been published which states that the full provision (live lessons, recorded lessons, independent tasks etc) for pupils examination years (Years 10-13) should be at least four hours a day on average. In the questionnaire over 80% stated that the current provision was enough, with similar numbers stating that there was too much and too little. The majority of the 'too long' answers were from parents of year 10 and 11 pupils, and most 'too short' answers were from key stage 3 parents. This is in line with working time stated by parents:

- KS4 pupils averaged 5.5 hours, with 33% doing over 5 hours a day and almost no-one doing less than 3 hours.
- KS3 pupils averaged 3.8 hours, with a quarter doing more than 5 hours a day and approximately 10% doing less than 3 hours.

I have today attended a meeting of Welsh-medium headteachers from schools across Wales and it was interesting to hear their feedback on their arrangements. Schools have piloted different approaches to delivery and everyone is now looking to respond to their experiences during the lock-down period. The schools that had followed a full timetable were looking to reduce it slightly - some cut lessons, others cut the length of lessons to create more gaps between lessons or to finish the day earlier.

## Teaching arrangements over the coming weeks

Following our consideration of your comments, here is an outline of our arrangements for the remainder of the half term (3 weeks). It is clear from the feedback that has been received that different families have very different views and it is not possible to please or respond to each family's situation. The model also responds to the changing assessment arrangements for pupils in years 11, 12 and 13.

### Sixth form

Sixth form arrangements will continue with timetables following their normal in-school timetable. Almost every lesson will be a live lesson. Some single lessons will be converted to independent work in subjects where this is appropriate, for example in the baccalaureate.

***Please note: The week commencing 25/1/21 is going to be a little different as we introduce the new arrangements. Wednesday afternoon (lessons 5-8) will be an opportunity for parents to ask questions of staff so there will be no lessons.***

### Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11)

Many parents noted that doing full days of live lessons in front of the screen has been too much for pupils, especially those who target the highest and lowest grades. The hours they do are long, with year 11 parents reporting that pupils doing 6.8 hours a day and year 10 doing 5.3 hours. We will therefore slightly reduce the timetable for them so that they get about 75% of the lessons online, with some independent tasks supporting the work in the live lessons. In order to maintain a fair timetable across the subjects this will mean some days that are heavier than others. We will encourage pupils to undertake health and well-being activities, including exercise, around their live lesson sessions.

***Please note: The week commencing 25/1/21 is going to be a little different as we introduce the new arrangements. Wednesday afternoon (lessons 5-8) will be an opportunity for parents to ask questions of staff so there will be no lessons.***

### Key Stage 3 (Years 7, 8 and 9)

The initial model for key stage 3 includes live lessons in two subjects and an independent task scheduled daily. The live lessons varied, with some double and some single lessons. Most parents indicated that there were enough live lessons at key stage 3, but the number wanting more was higher than the other key stages, with about 40% wanting more live lessons.

In order to harmonize provision we will move towards four live lessons a day – this means that live lessons make up half their normal teaching timetable. To get a fair cross-section of subjects these lessons include a mix of single and double lessons. There will be independent work on top of these, but in order to respond to parents' comments and to enable pupils to plan the independent work around the timetabled lessons this will not be scheduled daily. Independent work will include:

1. Subject tasks that are 'homework' following lessons. This work will be given by subject teachers in their lessons.
2. Physical education tasks. Weekly tasks will be given and we encourage pupils to do some exercise every day.
3. Core tasks for the year group: The curriculum includes cross-curricular elements that apply to everyone - this includes well-being and personal development, PSE, literacy, numeracy and digital skills. There will also be work on important cross-curricular themes. This work may include work prepared in school but also national resources. These will be provided weekly to the whole year in the year group Team by noon every Monday.
4. Extension tasks for the year group: Working from home gives pupils who want to challenge themselves the opportunity to develop in specific areas outside the core curriculum.

We aim to develop ambitious pupils and encourage pupils who want to challenge themselves. There will also be links to resources coming from universities and other institutions to broaden pupils' experiences. These tasks will be optional but some teachers may target specific pupils who need to be challenged and asked to do some of these. These will be provided for the whole year group in the Team year by noon every Monday.

***Please note: The week commencing 25/1/21 is going to be a little different as we introduce the new arrangements. Wednesday afternoon (lessons 5-8) will be an opportunity for parents to inquire so there will be no lessons. Independent KS3 tasks will be provided partly on Mondays and partly on Wednesdays instead of everything on Mondays. The following weeks follow the normal routine.***

## **Assessment for GCSE / AS / A level**

Following the government announcement of the summer 2021 assessment arrangements, many things remain unclear but the pressure to prepare for specific summer assessments is gone. Pupils are likely to continue to receive their education for longer than usual: in a normal year the assessment period begins in early May, but we assume teaching will continue into June this year. This will help us to ensure that pupils master the key aspects needed as they move from year 11 to post-16, or from year 13 to higher education, further education, apprenticeships or the workplace.

Schools will be expected to design a clear assessment scheme for grading, with the process being externally verified. We have no further details on these expectations at this time. As we hold the year 11 parents' evening or the afternoon to ask questions and as we produce reports, we will not be able to state what grade pupils will receive. We can discuss the quality of their work to date, or the quality of individual pieces, but we cannot share more until we are fully informed.

## **Afternoon to question teachers**

Remember that you have the opportunity to talk your children's subject teachers on Wednesday afternoon 27/1/21. The guidelines have already been sent to you, and we use the website at [ysgolpenweddig.schoolcloud.co.uk](http://ysgolpenweddig.schoolcloud.co.uk). I know that slots are limited but I hope this provides an opportunity to receive answers to subject specific questions. If you have questions after the afternoon you can refer them to the relevant progress and wellbeing lead or to [enquiries@penweddig.ceredigion.sch.uk](mailto:enquiries@penweddig.ceredigion.sch.uk).

I hope everyone remains healthy. Remember we are here to respond to questions or comments. You can contact us at [enquiries@penweddig.ceredigion.sch.uk](mailto:enquiries@penweddig.ceredigion.sch.uk).



Dr Rhodri Thomas  
(Headteacher)