



Tyfu gyda'n gilydd, dysgu am byth
Growing together, learning forever

20th September 2023

RE: SEPTEMBER UPDATE

Dear Parents/Carers

A warm welcome to all our school families, those returning and those joining us for the first time. It's been lovely to see our new and existing pupils settling into their new classes and into the routines of the school day. After a long summer (ish?) break, I'll take this opportunity to offer a few reminders on some aspects of school life – these are detailed in our school prospectus, available on the website, so please do take a look there if you want to clarify anything, or get in touch and we can answer any questions.

By now, you should have information specific to your child's class, including PE days, arrangements for reading etc. This is all detailed in a welcome presentation for each class, available in your child's Google Classroom. Every pupil in school (across the whole of Wales) has their own personal Hwb account (please get in touch if you haven't got username and password), and within this, Google Classroom is where your class teacher will post information including topic plans for the term.

This year, we will be having our first 'parents consultation' evenings earlier than previously. This is partly in response to some changes to legislation about reporting to parents. These will be face-to-face meetings (one appointment per child) on **either the 9th or 11th October**. Letters will go home shortly – please complete and return to request your preferred timeslot and your teacher will do their best to give you the available slot closest to your request. This meeting will have more of a focus on how your child has settled in, any particular points to discuss for the year ahead and teachers will offer some guidance on how you can further support your child's learning at home. In the spring term, there will be another parent consultation, very much the same, but with more of a focus on their progress during the year. We look forward to meeting up with you all on those dates.

Following this letter is a sheet with some reminders about some of our expectations and school routines. These will already be well known to the majority of parents I'm sure, but I'm sending this out to everyone either as reminders or information for our new parents.

Lastly, I'm sorry to have to write to you about this, but already in the first two weeks, there have been a few concerning incidents where parents have spoken to my staff in a manner which is unacceptable. This has included being verbally aggressive towards staff, sometimes also in-front of other parents and pupils. This shouldn't need to be said, but clearly this is not acceptable conduct and cannot be tolerated. I fully appreciate that parents may become easily upset about incidents that may occur, but adults need to remember firstly that children

may not always describe events as they actually occurred, and also that we as 'grown-ups' need to be modelling the types of behaviour (e.g. courtesy & respect) to others. Where parents have concerns, no matter how urgent, or strongly their views are held, can be handled in a calm, polite and respectful manner.

We have an open door policy and are always happy to discuss with parents, any concerns that they may have and will seek to solve problems in partnership with our parents. Governors are currently considering a policy that will set out clearly how we will deal with any such unacceptable behaviours in future and I will share this with you all in due course.

Kind Regards



Kevin Stroud
Headteacher

Reminders

Start / End of the day

Children (and adults!) are not permitted to use the climbing / fitness equipment at the start and end of the day, as there is no supervision in place. Also, pupils (and adults!) are not to cycle / scoot within the school grounds for the safety of the hundreds of pedestrians at that time. The children are reminded about this frequently, but we would appreciate your support with this as they often 'forget'.

Attendance

Across Wales, school attendance has deteriorated since Covid, and BCBC are keen for schools to improve their attendance. At Maes yr Haul, we have generally enjoyed good attendance by the vast majority of our pupils, but we are also keen to see this improve. Obviously there will be times where children are ill, and some other absences are unavoidable. There is no *entitlement* to term-time holidays and we expect all parents to notify the school well in advance of any planned holidays. It is my responsibility to then consider the circumstances of that absence request and approve / not approve that absence. Where parents chose to take holidays which are not authorised, this could result in the local authority taking punitive action. The holiday form is available on our website or in hard copy from the office.

School Uniform / PE Kit:

Please ensure children's uniform / coats / belongings etc are named – we have a huge pile (mountain!) of lost property – all without names, and all unclaimed. Pupils need to wear PE kit to school on the relevant day, plus their school jumper. For PE, pupils will need, a plain white t-shirt, plain black / dark shorts or jogging bottoms, plain black / dark trainers. Pupils will still need to change for any after school sports clubs.

Morning Break / Snacks / Drinks:

In line with government expectations, pupils are allowed and encouraged to [bring water \(only\) to school for in-class use](#), ideally in a reusable water bottle. All class sinks have drinkable water supplies. Pupils may [only bring fruit or vegetables for their morning snack](#). Staff are likely to speak to pupils if this is not being followed to politely remind them of expectations.

Historically, many pupils brought cake or sweets into class on their birthdays. This was stopped during the pandemic. Whilst those considerations are now behind us, we feel that the collective impact of this across the year for a class of 30+ (70+ in Nursery!) is quite substantial and not really in keeping with our healthy school ambitions, so we have taken the decision that this will no longer be allowed.

Lunchtimes:

Please provide a balanced packed lunch in containers that the children are able to handle independently and require minimal support from staff ([see WG Healthy Lunchboxes leaflet](#)). Glass containers, cans, fizzy drinks and sweets are not allowed. Please avoid products that include nuts (e.g. fruit bars containing nuts, hazelnut spread) to help us avoid risks to pupils with nut allergies. (This does not extend to products marked 'may contain nuts')