



## Ysgol Uwchradd **Whitmore** High School

Port Road West, Y Barri/Barry, Bro Morgannwg/Vale of Glamorgan CF62 8ZJ  
Ffôn/Telephone: (01446) 411411 Eboost/Email: WhitmoreHigh@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

Date 06<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that you have enjoyed a relaxing summer. I would like to update you as far as possible on a number of areas prior to the start of term.

### **Covid-19**

As you may have heard in the media, the First Minister has published the updated Coronavirus Control Plan for Wales, which sets out arrangements to move to “alert level zero” – a new phase which is designed to ensure a proportionate approach to COVID-19, reflecting the impact of vaccination and the balance of risks and harms. The Control Plan signals the expectation that schools should operate as normally as possible at alert level zero. Baseline measures including risk assessments, high levels of hygiene and ventilation, a one way system, and preventing attendance by individuals with COVID-19 symptoms will continue to be in place at Whitmore High as will the following protocols despite the move to level zero.

- Pupils will maintain specific zoned areas during lunch times. To this end, seating areas and recreational activities have been secured for all year groups
- The split lunch arrangement will continue. This year has demonstrated not only the Covid -19 mitigation measure benefit of this approach but also the positive wellbeing impact
- As we have entered alert level zero, face coverings are not routinely recommended, but may be worn by learners anywhere on the school site should they wish to do so
- Face coverings continue to be required on school transport
- Lateral Flow Tests will continue to be distributed from school

### **Mobile Phones**

I wrote to parents last term about the recent research that has pointed towards significant adverse effects on pupils’ wellbeing and attainment due to mobile phone use in schools. For these reasons, like many other schools, our new policy is for all phones and devices to be switched off and kept out of sight in the student’s school bag whilst on the site. We will allow the phone in the bag as we recognise that they may be needed for the journey to and from school each day. Below is the full policy which will come into effect from the beginning of term.

#### **Whitmore High Mobile Phone Policy (September 2021)**

- Having arrived on the school premises, all phones and devices will need to be switched off and kept out of sight in the student’s school bag (not in a pocket), together with any headphones.
- If phones or tablets are seen during lessons or around the school at any time, they will be confiscated and can be collected by the pupils from the student support desk at the end of the day.

- The same restrictions will apply to headphones. Headphones are not to be worn around the neck; they should be placed in bags during the school day.
- If a student refuses to hand their phone over, they will be sent to isolation for a period of one working day.
- Refusal to go to isolation will result in a one-day fixed-term exclusion with the day in isolation completed upon their re-admittance to the school.
- We understand there may be a need for pupils to communicate with parents during the school day. This can take place via the student support desk.
- Staff and site visitors will also refrain from personal phone use in all public areas of the school.
- **Mobile communication devices (phones/tablets) are not banned from school, as we recognise that they may be needed for the journey to and from school each day; however, they must remain in bags at all times on school premises.**

We very much look forward to welcoming our learners back this week and to beginning a new and exciting academic year. Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all learners who received their examination results over the summer. We wish them the very best for their future.

Yours sincerely



Innes Robinson

Head of School