

Response to Covid-19 – #TheLlanWay

Here at Llanedeyrn Primary School, we have lived through and survived the Covid-19 pandemic with grit, determination and a whole-hearted desire to make the future even better than before for our School – children and adults.

Covid-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 Pandemic, also known as the Coronavirus Pandemic, is a global pandemic of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The novel virus was first identified from an outbreak in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. Attempts to contain it there failed, allowing the virus to spread worldwide.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on 30 January 2020 and a pandemic on 11 March 2020. As of 23 June 2022, the pandemic had caused more than 541 million cases and 6.32 million confirmed deaths, making it one of the deadliest in history.

Research

Issues that have arisen from the Pandemic and as a result of lockdown experiences:

- Use of masks – stunted developmental Oracy and social skills;
- Less human interaction leading to an increase in anxiety and stress;
- Increased Financial burdens on families;
- Increased hours online leading to internet / gaming addiction and increased levels of cyber bullying;
- Decrease in the hours spent outside let alone in nature;
- Less sight of vulnerable children and less intervention from support services;
- Rise in the early onset of cardiovascular diseases and obesity in children;
- New 'classrooms' – hybrid learning;
- Lost academic learning;
- Children preferring to be at home as experiences were so positive or are concerned as they need to be there to 'protect'.

Successes for our School

- Relationships with families;
- Hwb School work in 2 local schools;
- Paper booklets given out for families with no access to IT;
- FSM food given to families;
- Additional resources given to families – sanitary wear, extra food;
- Hwb School run here;
- Live assemblies;
- Google Classroom – clear and welcoming for families including Sports Day, Oracy Days, Leavers Assemblies;
- Weekly phone calls;
- Online daily assemblies that support the Health and Well-being Scheme of Work;
- Adult Support differentiated learning for ALN;
- Professional Learning for all Staff – daily Welsh sessions and a programme of learning;

- Breaktimes and Lunchtimes for positive behaviour management;
- Parents Evenings online.

Main Issues for our School

- Lack of IT equipment – families sharing a phone, no printers;
- If equipment given then lack of internet access;
- If internet access given through a dongle then lack of IT skills from Parents and Carers;
- If all of the above in place then some Parents and Carers told us that they could cope with the work up to Reception level but not above;
- Larger families found the amount of work for each child difficult to manage when more than 1 or 2 children at home;
- Children staying indoors.

Challenges for School Leadership

- Lack of staffing – teachers and LSAs;
- Lack of supply staff and then quality of supply staff;
- Having to cover classes, lunchtimes and breaktimes;
- Difficult to release for monitoring purposes;
- Staff going home at all times of the day;
- Rotas for cover – early morning meetings – 7:00am to 7:30am HT and DHT;
- High quality teaching and learning inconsistencies when teachers not in school and supply staff not delivering the same quality or response to learning as per our Policy;
- Estates Manager absent from work on numerous occasions – SLT opening and closing school;
- SLT themselves absent from work through Covid;
- No admin staff for a period as all off with Covid;
- Supporting staff through the Pandemic when concerned about taking Covid home;
- Supporting families back into school and those with vulnerable family members, and financial crises;
- Safeguarding vulnerable learners when not in school and unseen for periods of time;
- Adult support for children with ALN – lack of and quality when school staff absent from work;
- Interventions not completed or taking longer as staff absent.

School's Response

- Additional teacher and LSA supporting in KS2;
- Small classes in Years 1 and 2 for the Summer Term and Autumn Term 2021;
- Small classes in Year 4 for 2022;
- Improved outdoor areas in Foundation Phase;
- Increase in trips and experiences for all children – local visits, across Wales and to London and Birmingham;
- Subsidised overnight trips to Storey Arms for Years 3, 4 and 5;
- PGL subsidised trip over the weekend for Year 6;
- Choir Retreat to Hebron Hall overnight for Years 5 and 6;
- Harry Potter trip for Year 5 to the Studios;
- 2 for 1 for siblings on trips;
- Focus on Well-being through the Health and Well-being scheme, Growth Mindset, developing GRIT, and living within our 5 Core Values.

Covid-Keepers

- Relationships with families – we have been in their homes as never before and we have talked with parents and carers about their worries, successes and their personal lives;
- Professional Learning for all staff – programmes have been set up for Curriculum Design, the new Curriculum for Wales, The 12 Pedagogical Principles, and Llan Talks;

- Breaktimes and Lunchtimes – year groups using the playground at different times rather than the whole school. Increased playing together and better relationships;
- Assemblies – hybrid approach so that children can watch in class, live inside or outside;
- 10-minute window of starting the day relieves pressure on families and on the car park;
- Google Classroom – increased focus on using the Hwb in school and engagement at home. This helped with the personalised assessments as children could log on;
- Using the outdoor area for learning and mindfulness;
- Parents Evenings online – parents and carers prefer being at home and know that they can make additional appointments to see teachers;
- General hygiene with hand washing.