Message

From: NR (OFM - Communications) [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=1E6C188F4446471CABBEA29B1256F9DC NR
Sent: 18/03/2020 12:57:16 PM
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Subject: FW: Welsh Government News: Statement from Minister for Education, Kirsty Williams, on school closures in Wales:

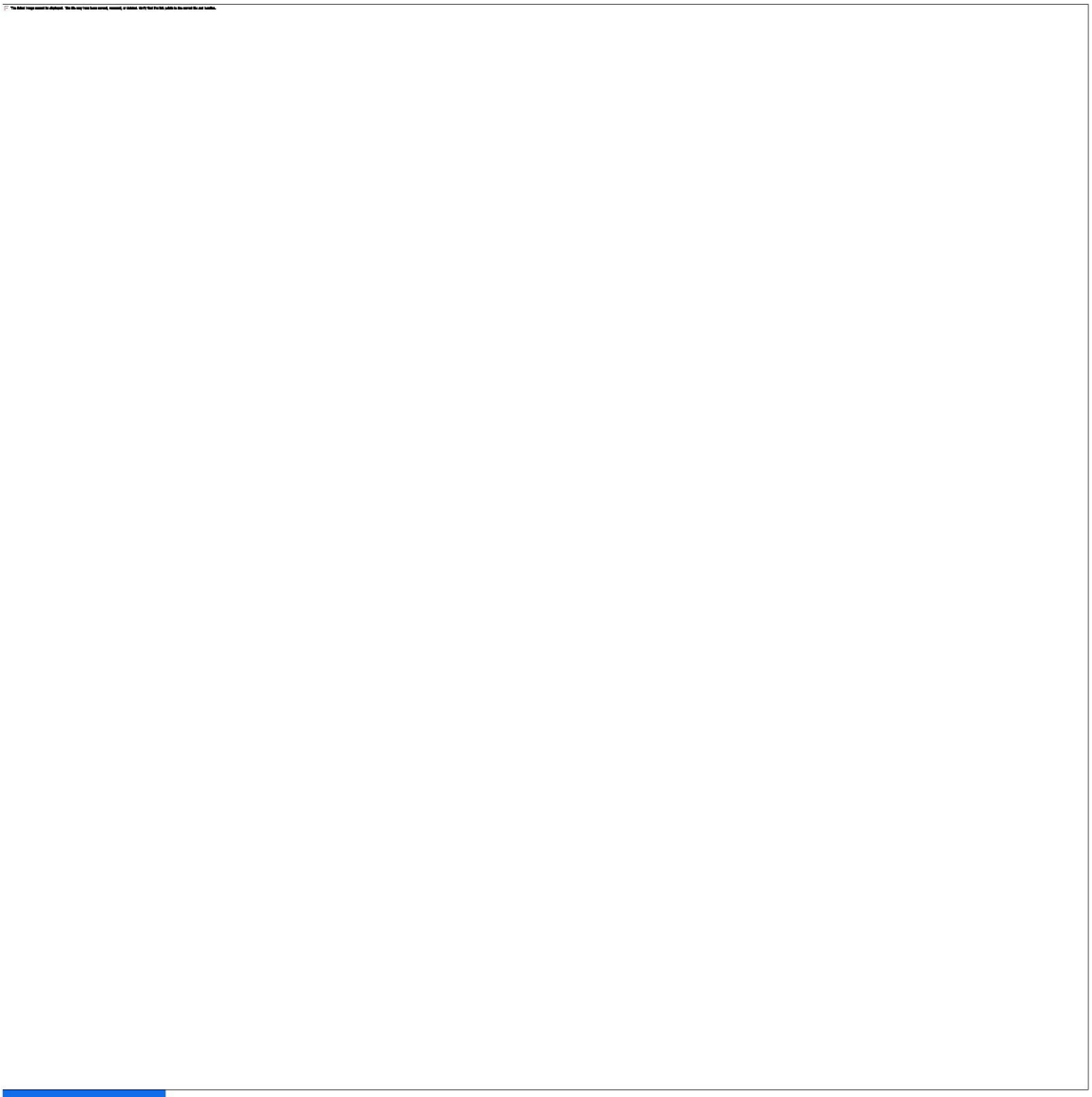
Issuing shortly…..

From: NR <welshgovernment@prgloo.com>
Sent: 18 March 2020 12:54
To: NR (OFM - Communications) <NR @gov.wales>
Subject: Welsh Government News: Statement from Minister for Education, Kirsty Williams, on school closures in Wales:

Newyddion gan Lywodraeth Cymru

DRAFT CONTENT - Publish Date TBC

Statement from Minister for Education, Kirsty Williams, on school closures in Wales:



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We are in an unprecedented period, one that is changing hour-by-hour, and governments around the world are having to make quick decisions.

Firstly, I would like to extend my gratitude to all those working in our education and childcare settings for the critical work you have been undertaking, under incredible pressure to support our

children and young people. You have been at the front-line in supporting wider efforts to prepare for the challenges we are all now facing and I am incredibly grateful and proud.

Today, I can announce we are bringing forward the Easter break for schools in Wales. Schools across Wales will close for statutory provision of education at the latest on 20 March 2020.

I have been clear up to now that the continuity of education and the wellbeing of our learners has been at the heart of my decision making. This will always be the case.

From next week, schools will have a new purpose. They will help support those most in need, including people involved in the immediate response to the coronavirus outbreak. I am working with my colleagues in the Cabinet, with government officials and our partners in local government to develop and finalise these plans.

The key areas we are looking at are supporting and safeguarding the vulnerable and ensuring continuity of learning. We are looking in detail at how we can support and safeguard all those who benefit from free school meals and children with additional learning needs. I will make sure you are kept up-to-date.

While this will apply to schools, childcare settings are expected to remain open until we have definitive advice from the Chief Medical Officer and from Public Health Wales that any closures are required. Parents can, and should, speak with their usual childcare providers if they need care over the Easter holidays

I have discussed my intentions with the Leader of the Welsh Local Government Association, Andrew Morgan, who reflects the views of local authorities. Some school staff will likely have an important role to play in this. We are working closely with our key stakeholders to look at what this will look like for both education and childcare settings, including Flying Start. This position will of course evolve over the coming days and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.

One of the critical decisions that we will seek to clarify with urgency is that of the forthcoming examinations. I am also working with Qualifications Wales and the WJEC about this year's exam series. In line with all education ministers across the UK, I will be making a further announcement shortly.

From the outset, the decisions being taken have been focused on public health advice, and it is right that these science-based recommendations are front and centre of the decisions being made.

The announcement I am making today will help ensure an orderly closure for schools so that they have the time to prepare. However, I am conscious that the SAGE Committee and COBR meet this afternoon, and I will of course be listening closely to see if advice changes and any further urgent decisions about school closures are needed.

Today's decision will help ensure an orderly closure, so schools have time to prepare ahead of the early break.

My main message for everyone is to stay safe and stay well. We will work together and we will face this outbreak together.

I will of course continue to keep you updated.

Please follow the latest public health advice. The latest guidance is always available on our website at gov.wales/coronavirus.

Contact Information

NR

Irrelevant & Sensitive

Name Redacted @gov.wales

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KW speech

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Anfonwyd y datganiad hwn atoch gan Dîm Cyfryngau Llywodraeth Cymru gan ein bod yn credu y bydd o ddiddordeb i chi.

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