



Friday 18 December 2020

Dear Parent

## **January Return – Update 1**

### **Staggered return to school**

Yesterday the Government announced that secondary schools are to implement a phased return to on-site learning in the first week of term.

#### **This means that between Tuesday 5 January and Friday 8 January:**

- **The following students will return to school as normal;**
  - **All Year 11s**
  - **Vulnerable children\***
  - **Children of critical workers\*.**
- **All other students will remain at home and access their learning remotely**, via Microsoft Teams. We will endeavour to make as many of these lessons live as possible, though this will be dependent on the number of students in the academy.
- Year 10 students taking their Travel & Tourism examination on Friday 8 January will be invited in at a point during the week to support their preparation. This will be in addition to attending on the day. Further details will follow on this.

It is anticipated that all students will then return to school as normal on Monday 11 January.

Students attending school will follow normal routines, with no changes to the structure of the school day or uniform expectations.

\*Please see the link enclosed for guidance on vulnerable children and children of critical workers.

### **Free school meals provision**

We will continue to provide free school meals for eligible families throughout the first week of term. Please complete the form we will share early next week to access this. We will then issue details of how this will be provided, on Monday 4 January.

### **Coronavirus testing in schools**

From the first week in January, secondary schools will have access to significant additional optional testing for coronavirus. The intent of this is to more rapidly identify students who may have the virus without symptoms, therefore preventing them passing it on unknowingly. And, to reduce the number of students who need to self-isolate when positive tests for others are received.

We are currently awaiting details of how this will work. In the meantime, I would like to reassure parents that once this is in place, no student will be tested without parental consent. We will keep you fully informed with the process when we have further information.

**Further information – please return form when issued**

We will share a Microsoft Forms questionnaire early next week. We would appreciate it if you could respond to this as it will allow us to plan how many students we will have in school, and how to best support those who are not attending, especially those in receipt of free school meals or without access to ICT at home.

For students learning remotely, full guidance on how to access form time and lessons via Microsoft Teams will be reissued on Monday 4 January.

**Thank you**

I have asked that staff and students take a well-deserved break over the Christmas holiday. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's return in January, please contact us through our normal channels and we will respond promptly on the 4 January, before the beginning of term.

I wrote in September about the need to support each other as a community throughout the changes and challenges of this term. Thank you for your ongoing role in this and in supporting our young people who have consistently demonstrated their maturity, resilience and diligence throughout the academic year so far.

On behalf of all staff, I would like to wish you a peaceful holiday period and a positive start to the New Year.

Yours faithfully



Mr B Driver  
Principal

Enclosed:

Guidance on critical workers and vulnerable children who can access schools or educational settings: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>