

30 December 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

I apologise for writing to you during a holiday period. You may well be aware that this evening the Secretary of State for Education has announced a material change to the arrangements made for the start of term. Schools do not get advance notice of such announcements, so I was unable to write to you earlier.

You will also be aware that there has been a sharp rise in Coronavirus cases both locally and nationally. This has prompted the Secretary of State to delay the staggered return of pupils by one week.

For students in Years 11, 12 and 13 this means that you will not return to face-to-face teaching on 4 January as planned, but instead access remote education for this week. Work will be published on Firefly, and some lessons will be delivered live via Microsoft Teams. You will return to face to face lessons on 11 January. It is intended that prior to you returning, we will offer you access to Lateral Flow Testing, aimed at reducing the number of Covid 19 infections in school. The arrangements for these were discussed in my last letter to you, and further details of these will be sent out early next week.

For students in Years 7, 8, 9 and 10, you will not return to face-to-face teaching on 11 January as planned, but instead access remote education for the two weeks of term, from 4 -18 January. Work will be published on Firefly, and some lessons will be delivered live via Microsoft Teams. You will return to face to face lessons on 18 January. It is intended that prior to you returning, we will offer you access to Lateral Flow Testing, aimed to reduce the number of Covid 19 infections in school. The arrangements for these were discussed in my last letter to you, and further details of these will be sent out prior to their introduction for your year groups.

Arrangements are being made to provide Free School Meals to those who are eligible but unable to attend school because of these circumstances and we will contact those eligible in due course.

For some students with specific and defined circumstances, we had planned to offer face-to-face provision next week. This provision will go ahead as planned. We will be in contact with students in Year 11 who may now also require this provision.

I am keen to get all students back into face-to-face learning as soon as possible. However, it is plain that the current national picture with regards the pandemic has warranted that all secondary schools take this action in order to limit the spread of the virus. I would ask that all parents and carers try to ensure that their children abide by the new Tier 4 restrictions so that we are able to continue to keep our school community safe.

Yours sincerely,

Mr D Bird