



Dear Parents and Carers,

Firstly, my apologies for interrupting your Christmas holiday, you may be aware that just as the school broke up for Christmas the Government made an announcement with regards to how the start of Term 3 will operate. Currently the Government has released this statement [here](#)

The information below may be revised in due course should the Government provide any additional announcements

In line with this government guidance, the school will only be open for students in exam year groups (Year 11 & 13) during the week of **Tuesday 5th – Friday 8th January**, whilst other year groups (Years 7-10 & 12) will receive remote learning. As whole year groups will be working from home we will follow our 'whole year group bubble' remote learning plans. This will mean that all lessons, as per your child's timetable (apart from practical core PE lessons) will be taught 'live' through Microsoft Teams. Registers will be taken at the start of each lesson and attendance monitored. Support for Microsoft Teams can be accessed here: [Help with accessing Microsoft Teams](#) . Before the start of term we will send you further communication with more detailed information about our remote learning.

Year 12 Exams

Year 12 exams will take place as planned. Students in Year 12 are invited to come into school and go straight to the exam hall and then make their way home afterwards to continue with their on-line learning.

Year 11 iMedia students

Year 11 iMedia students were due to attend school on Monday 4th January to catch up on coursework. Due to the Government changes this will now be cancelled and an alternative date found.

Monday, 4 January will remain as an INSET day as planned.

Remote devices

In September we collated a list of all the families who do not have a computer or tablet to access Microsoft Teams. On Monday 4th January, during our Inset day, we will endeavour to contact these families and either arrange for the collection of a loan device or arrange a time when a member of staff can drop one to the child's house. You will be aware this is a logistical challenge so please bear with us!

Children of Key workers and Vulnerable Children

Between **Tuesday 5th January** and **Friday 8th January** the school will offer children of key workers/ vulnerable children in years 7-10 & 12 the opportunity to attend school where necessary. We will facilitate students on site access to the same **remote learning via Microsoft Teams** that all other students at home will receive.

Children of key workers/ vulnerable children who are on site will remain in their year group bubbles and their timings of the days will remain as per their timetable. If your child is in Year 7-10 & 12 and you are a keyworker, or if your child is vulnerable and you would like them to access the online learning in school, we ask that you complete the booking form below so that we can ensure we plan for the appropriate space. Alternatively, you may choose to keep them at home and access the online learning.



[Key worker or vulnerable child booking form](#)

The deadline for completion of this form will be **Wednesday 30th December** but if you can complete this form earlier this will support the school in planning for students who will be on site.

Vulnerable children and young people include those who:

- *are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children and young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child*
- *have an education, health and care (EHC) plan*
- *have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued full-time attendance, this might include:*
- *children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services or in the process of being referred to children's services*
- *adopted children or children on a special guardianship order*
- *those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')*
- *those living in temporary accommodation*
- *those who are young carers*
- *those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example, due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)*
- *care leavers*
- *other children and young people at the provider and local authority's discretion including pupils who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health*

Keyworker Children Definition

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

Full Return from Monday 11th January

According to the current guidance, all students will return to school the week beginning **Monday 11th January**. That said, you may be aware of various news reports suggesting children should learn from home for longer. Should anything be confirmed, we will of course let you know.

Free School Meals

If your child is eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) and learning at home in the first week of term, we would like to reimburse you their FSM money. If we already have your bank details from when we forwarded the Christmas Holiday Free School Meals money, we will use the same account and pay the money entitled from Tuesday 5th January – Friday 8th January, this will be a total of £10.40p.



We will pay this into your account by the end of the first week of term. If we do not have your bank details, we will send a supermarket voucher worth £10.40p to your home address by the end of the first week of term.

Mass Lateral Flow Testing

The other announcement made just as we were breaking up for the Christmas holiday was about the mass testing of young people in schools. At the time of writing this letter we still do not have the full DfE guidance or training materials and have not taken delivery of any testing kits. However, in considering the logistics of this testing process for 1200 students, we do know that without

volunteers it is going to be an almost impossible task. Once I am clear, I will be sharing further information, including consent forms and a leaflet explaining in further detail what a lateral flow test is and also how it would be conducted in school. Initially this letter to you today is to identify whether we have any parents in the school body who might be willing to give up a day of their time in the new year to support this roll-out. We do know that parent volunteers would also need to undertake training (we believe online) in order to be able to take up this role. Volunteers would be supervising/processing tests, as we have been advised that students will be expected to self-swab. I recognise this is a big 'ask' so please do not feel under any pressure.

With only limited information at present, we will not be conducting lateral flow tests until we are satisfied that it is safe, we have all the relevant consent forms from parents, and we have all the detailed logistical requirements in place. I must also state that it is **not mandatory** for students to take a lateral flow test to be able to return to school on their due date.

If you feel able to support the school in any future plans we devise, we would be really grateful if you could complete the form below. At this stage we recognise that this is purely an indication of support you may offer, and should we be in a position to roll out testing for the entire school body, then we would contact you with more details.

[Parent volunteer form](#)

I apologise that some of this information is slightly vague, unfortunately at the moment we just don't have all the answers as we are still waiting for further guidance. I did however want to pass on the information that we do currently have. We will be doing our best to confirm arrangements as soon as possible. I do hope that you and your families have a wonderful Christmas and thank you in advance for reading this letter during the holidays!

Thank you for your ongoing support and Merry Christmas.

Yours faithfully,

Paul Skipp
Headteacher