



31 December 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

## Re: Return to School in January update

I hope you have enjoyed a restful and enjoyable holiday over the last week. As we approach the start of the Spring Term, we once again find ourselves in the position of having to communicate information with you as a result of government decisions that were shared with schools yesterday afternoon and evening. The full address given by Gavin Williamson, Secretary of State for Education, to the House of Commons can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/education-secretary-sets-out-school-contingency-plans-for-england>

The key points that are important for you to note are:

### When should my child return to school after the holiday period?

- Full-time on-site provision will be provided for the following groups of students from the first day of term on **Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2021**:
  - ✓ 'Vulnerable' (as defined in Department for Education guidance below)
  - ✓ Children of Critical Workers

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>
- Full-time on-site provision will be provided for the following groups of students from **Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2021**:
  - ✓ 'Vulnerable' (as defined in Department for Education guidance below)
  - ✓ Children of Critical Workers
  - ✓ Year 11
  - ✓ Year 13
- The following students should return to school on **Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021**:
  - ✓ Year 7
  - ✓ Year 8
  - ✓ Year 9
  - ✓ Year 10
  - ✓ Year 12.

We may need to write to you again about this issue as more guidance becomes available to schools from the government. From Wednesday 6 January, those not in school will be provided remote education in the same way as they have been in the past with students accessing Google Classroom as usual at their normal lesson time on their timetable.

### A reminder about new arrangements for testing staff and students for COVID-19 at school

You may have read about the government's wish to introduce large scale and more frequent testing of staff and pupils in secondary schools, where this is possible. As a means of reducing the amount of time that staff and students have to spend in isolation at home in the future, we are supportive of this initiative and feel it will bring about a real benefit over time.



Please rest assured, we will only look to introduce large scale lateral flow testing at our school when we are sure it can be administered efficiently and safely, reducing the potential disruption to your son/daughter's learning in the future.

Our staff will continue to plan for the introduction of rapid testing for all staff and students. We will write to you in a separate letter to explain how this will affect your son/daughter and to request your permission on **Monday 4 January 2021**. We will also be asking for your confirmation that you will be sending your child into school from Wednesday 6 January if you are a critical worker or your child is classed as vulnerable. If your child is classed as vulnerable as defined below, they should be in school. The deadline for returns will be **Tuesday 5 January 2021**.

### Would my child be classed as 'vulnerable'?

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 Plan (EHCP)
- 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.

I am very sorry that I have again had to communicate all this information with you at this late stage. The important thing now is for us to work together to ensure your son/daughter's education is disrupted as little as possible over the coming weeks.

Yours faithfully

Mr C Bishop  
Headteacher