

31 December 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

IMPORTANT UPDATE - THE BEGINNING OF THE SPRING TERM 2021

I hope that you and your family enjoyed a peaceful and safe Christmas.

My letter today includes important information relating to when your child will return to school at the start of this coming term.

You will have seen media coverage of recent government announcements for secondary schools in January. The Government has advised that secondary schools in England should not fully re-open to all students and staff in the first two weeks of term (weeks commencing 4 and 11 January 2021).

I do appreciate that these changes come at short notice but we continue to follow all Government guidance on Covid-19 in order to safeguard our students, staff and wider school community. The newly revised plans are in response to the significant rise in Covid-19 cases across the country, due to the new, more easily transmissible strain of the virus. At the moment, Barnsley's infection rate is rising, but still below the national average.

We would advise that you should only send your child(ren) into school if absolutely necessary. Education will be provided online for all students for the week beginning Tuesday 5 January 2021, as detailed below.

The only students in school next week from Tuesday 5 January should be those classified as vulnerable, along with children of critical workers (see [here](#) for the definition of a critical worker). If your child needs to attend school then we will be asking you to contact school on Monday 4 January. All students who do come to school should enter school via their respective Year Group entrances.

I would like to update you on our plans, following these latest announcements. We will provide as much face-to-face teaching as we can, to support students who have upcoming external examinations. We have put a full programme of remote learning in place for all other children.

A full breakdown by year group is provided overleaf. In summary:

- On **Monday 4 January**, the school will closed for all students for a staff training day.
- School will be open from **Tuesday 5 January** for:
 - Vulnerable children in all year groups
 - Children of critical key workers in all year groups

School will be open from **Monday 11 January** for all students in **Year 11**

- School will be open **for all** students from **Monday 18 January**.

All other students will receive their learning remotely for the first two weeks of term. Students are expected to engage fully with their timetabled remote learning and I thank you for your support with this.

Remote Learning

In order to access remote learning, students must adhere to the online learning protocol which will be sent out on Monday 4th January. All "lessons" will take place as per the timetable apart from practical core PE. In those sessions we would recommend that students take a break from their home computer and engage in some form of physical activity where possible: TEAMS will provide guidance for students regarding appropriate activities. As things stand at 2:00 pm 31 December 2020, the educational provision for the next three weeks relating to the different year groups is summarised in the table below.

...Changing lives

Vulnerable children and children of critical workers - Attend the academy as normal from Tuesday 5 January. You can find more information about this via the following [link](#).

Monday 4 January – Staff INSET day

Week commencing Tuesday 5 January 2021	
Year group (s)	Educational Provision
7 & 8	Work set on TEAMS, following normal timetables. On Thursday and Friday a livestreamed Form Time will occur 10:40-11:00am
9	Work set on TEAMS, following normal timetables. On Thursday and Friday English, maths and science will be livestreamed.
10	Work set on TEAMS for English, maths and science on Tuesday. Wednesday to Friday all students will focus on their Option Choices. As there are external examinations for the vast majority of students, there will be a combination of live streamed lessons and work set on TEAMS.
11	Lessons livestreamed from school, where possible, following normal timetables. If for any reason the lesson cannot be livestreamed, work will be set on TEAMS 5-10 minutes past the normal start time of the lesson.
Week commencing Monday 11 January 2021	
Year group (s)	Educational Provision
7, 8, 9 & 10	Work set on TEAMS, following normal timetables. Some live streaming of form and lessons will occur. Further details will be sent out Friday 8 January.
11	Face to face lessons in school. All students should report to the academy as normal from Monday 11 January to benefit from face-to-face teaching.

Week commencing Monday 18 January 2021

Students from all year groups should report to school for face to face lessons.

As you can imagine, the above could change, depending upon the spread of the virus over the next few days and weeks. That is why you will receive regular updates from school.

Testing

Schools will be given access to Covid testing from 4 January 2021. We are currently awaiting further guidance on the government's plans for voluntary testing in schools. We hope that this will be a positive development, to allow us to minimise the disruption to staff and students and maintain as much in person teaching and learning as possible. We will update you as soon as we can, as more information is provided by the government.

I would like to thank all members of our school community for their support during this challenging time and we will continue to provide additional information to you, as and when we receive new guidance from the Department for Education.

I wish you and your families a happy and safe New Year.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs E Briggs
Principal