

Saturday, 02 January 2021

Dear Parents,

ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE START OF THE SPRING TERM – UPDATE 02.01.21

I hope that this email finds you and your families well. I am writing further to the Government's announcement on the 30th December regarding our revised arrangements for the return to school for secondary students. In light of recent infection rates and to allow secondary schools an appropriate amount of time to roll out mass testing, the government has taken the decision to delay the return to school for the spring term.

Monday 4th January - we have decided to take up the offer from the DFE and make this a professional development day to allow staff time to plan for changes, especially the intricacies of planning for the mass testing. Work will not therefore be set for students to complete on this day as it is reserved for staff professional development.

- All students in Years 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 will remain at home this week.
- Years 12 and 13 mock examinations **will not go ahead this week**. This will be reviewed and information shared with you and the students.
- The government have stated that "Vocational exams scheduled for the first weeks of January will go ahead as planned". Therefore, students in years 12 and 13 will need to attend school **only** to sit any vocational examinations they are entered for where this applies.

By removing the expectation of any KS3 teaching or task delivery next week this creates the capacity my staff will need to review our remote learning provision for the Spring Term, to ensure that the children of critical workers and other eligible students can be adequately supervised in school and to make the necessary preparations to commence mass LFD testing from Monday 11th January.

Tuesday 5th January – Friday 8th January – the school is open only for students of critical workers and other DFE defined eligible students from 9:00am.

- Remote learning will only be set for students in Years 11 and 13 from Tuesday 5th January as per the DFE guidance. We will keep this under review for other students especially regarding Year 12 who are also considered an examination group at Rooks Heath.

Monday 11th January – Years 11 and 13 students are scheduled to return for lessons in school. All other year groups will remain at home and begin the [Remote Learning Contingency Plan](#) .

- Students in Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12 will be taught remotely through Microsoft Teams all week. A combination of live lessons and online set tasks with useful guidance found here: [Remote Learning Information](#).

- Students will need to log in before 10:00am every morning starting from Monday 11th January and respond to the registration question of the day. We will be monitoring student access to our online platforms and ask parents to support their children to engage fully with this.

Monday 18th January

- Students in Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12 will return to Rooks Heath School to be taught in school unless the guidance changes. Please note, no-one should attend education or childcare if they have symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) or are self-isolating due to symptoms in their household.

If your child has no access to a computer or the internet, please ensure that you have completed our [Student Internet Access Survey](#), so that paperwork can be prepared for collection during the first day back (a phone call will be made when the paper pack is ready for collection).

The school is open from Tuesday 5th January to children of critical workers and other eligible students as identified by the DFE criteria which you can read here: [Vulnerable Children and young people \(DFE\)](#). Please contact the school and complete this short [survey](#) if you would like your child to be considered for this. Please do this 10am on Monday 4th January if you would like to book a place. For all applications received by this date, you may assume you have a place and your child should arrive at school on Tuesday 5th January at 9:00am unless you are contacted with an alternative plan. Thank you to those parents who have already communicated their needs to us with regard to this provision.

Mass Testing in schools:

It is clear that mass Lateral Flow Device (LFD) testing in schools for Coronavirus is an expectation and schools will need to be up and running by Monday 11th January for staff and students. We fully appreciate the nervous and anxious feelings that may exist around the plan for schools to introduce mass testing. All schools are expected to take up the offer of asymptomatic testing. The testing will be optional but is strongly encouraged by the DFE, particularly in areas of higher prevalence of the virus. Consent will be required from the student or parent as appropriate and we would not put pressure on families to be tested in school. We want to ensure that we are fully prepared. We will be using the week from the 4th January to fully digest the guidance and ensure we have robust plans in place. Further communication about this will be sent next week.

I had a productive meeting with my Senior Leadership Team on Thursday this week and we will continue to do our best to support our staff and students in ensuring we provide the best provision we can in these demanding circumstances. The DFE will review the contingency framework on the 18th January and we will continue to inform you of any changes as we are made aware of them.

I would like to take this opportunity to once again thank you for your continued support in these very unusual and challenging times. I wish you all very well into the new year.

Yours sincerely



Mrs M Manderson
Headteacher