

06 January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

Re: Update 6 January 2021

I can hardly believe that we are only three days into the Spring Term and already, so much has changed in such a short space of time. I would like to thank parents/carers and students for again adapting to our remote learning programme. The school has invested a great deal of time in supporting staff to be able to plan and deliver live lessons, as we feel this teacher/student contact will greatly support students in their new learning.

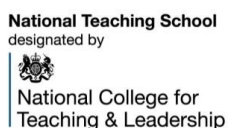
Remote Learning

Student Attendance – We are pleased that the vast majority of students are actively engaging in live lessons and completing class work to a high standard. We would like to thank parents for their continued support in encouraging their children to access the lessons provided to ensure the disruption caused to learning is minimalised. Please be assured that subject teachers are taking registers for live lessons and the attendance officer will text parents on a daily basis to keep them updated when students have missed lessons. As like in school, we have systems in place to monitor student attendance and engagement and will continue to celebrate and recognize the efforts of students during this lockdown period. The Head of Year and the Senior leadership Team may be required to call or meet with parents of students where there are concerns or reluctance to participate in remote learning.

Live Lesson Timetables – Monday 11 January-Friday 15 January – Live lessons/pre-recorded voice over lessons will continue to be delivered to exam year groups in Key Stage 4. Exam year groups include Year 9, 10 and 11 and they will be following their usual timetable.

Students in Key Stage 3 (Year 7 and 8) should access their normal timetable for all lessons via Microsoft Teams. We are conscious of supporting the younger students to maintain engagement and concentration and we have therefore made the decision to run lessons for fifty minutes instead of one hour to allow students to have a stretch break in between lessons, as we appreciate it is a lot of time to sit at a computer. All lessons will start at their normal time but will finish ten minutes early, we will trial this for the week.

Staff Absence – During the school closure, there may be periods of staff absence or illness as per any other period in the school year. This will mean live lessons will be unable to be delivered as normal. During the member of staff's absence, we have put structures in place to minimise the impact on the remote learning provided. Resources will be made available in the assignments section of the specific team if the member of staff is ill; these will often be a PowerPoint with instructions for students to follow and tasks for them to complete.



Exams – Year 11 Students

As you may have heard from the recent government announcements, GCSE exams in the summer have been cancelled. The DFE and OFQUAL are currently working to provide details as to how your child's GCSE grades will be determined and when we have more news, rest assured we will keep you informed. At this moment in time, we strongly urge your child to continue to log onto Teams and take part in lessons as normal.

Not only will this help maintain a normal routine for your child and boost their well-being, it will also mean that students and teachers will be in a good position to provide any evidence required to support the awarding of your child's grades when further information is supplied. It will also ensure that when your child begins their Post 16 qualifications in September, any learning gaps will be minimal. At the moment, students who study Level 2 vocational qualifications, which include BTEC health and social care, OCR sport science, OCR creative Imedia, BTEC digital media and RSL performing arts are still being asked to sit the exam component of the qualification. If your child studies any of these subjects, it is vital that they continue to work hard and with their teacher on any work set.

Free School Meals

Students in receipt of free school meals will receive vouchers weekly from the school, these will be distributed on a Monday.

Laptops

The school are awaiting a delivery of laptops from the Department for Education. Unfortunately, these laptops will only be available for disadvantaged students and students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). We have only been allocated 46 laptops and we do not believe these will arrive in school until February. At this time, we will contact relevant parents to discuss eligibility criteria.

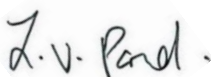
Mass Testing

At present, the mass testing programme is still scheduled to commence when students return to school. Please can we ask parents to complete the consent form as soon as possible to allow us to fully prepare to start this as soon as students are allowed to attend school.

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=gpGINmBo_0aOcv4qHhM4ZmeL1Sr67ShIkNpjS6uu9PRUMTICUEZQQIIOREFMVjk2UDA0UUFUT0VKSC4u

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely



Mrs L Pond
Headteacher



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National College for
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National Support School
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