

18 December 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

As you may well have seen in the news, the Government announced yesterday afternoon that we need to stagger the start of term to minimise the risk of infection. The guidance states we should be *"reducing the number of children in secondary schools and colleges for the first full week of January, with vulnerable children, children of critical workers and those in exam cohorts, receiving face to face education, with others learning remotely."*

Therefore, Monday 4th January is a planned INSET day so no children will be expected in school.

Between Tuesday 5th and Friday 8th January Year 11 will have school as normal. They will be expected in school, in full school uniform.

Years 7-10 will NOT be physically in school but will have lessons taught via Microsoft teams. They will be expected to log into Teams and to engage in an online lesson as per their scheduled timetable. This includes tutor time. Your child needs to access the Teams Calendar on the left. When they do that they will see the joining button for the lesson which will appear prior to the lesson. Our expectations with regards conduct during lessons online can be found in our behaviour policy. Pupils should not have their cameras on please and must mute the microphone unless asked to contribute. Contributions can be made through the Teams Chat.

Today we will be contacting parents of pupils in Year 7-10 who, according to the Government criteria, should be physically in school.

If you are a critical worker and therefore need your child in school, please contact me on the following email: **criticalworker@testvalley.hants.sch.uk**. As our children are of secondary age, we would expect that the need for them to be in the building rather than learning remotely is minimal.

We anticipate buses will run as normal but are awaiting confirmation from the Local Authority. If there is a change to the bus service I will inform you before the start of term.

You may have also seen on the news that schools will be expected to conduct rapid testing in the new year. As yet, we do not have the full details on this but will be in touch as soon as we do.

These are extra ordinary times with communication from the Government coming late in the day. I appreciate that this late news is not ideal but please be assured we will do everything possible in school to ensure that your child's learning is not hampered.

Thank you for the lovely emails of support which so many of you have sent. It is heartening to know we are working in partnership

Happy Christmas

Toni Wilden
Headteacher