

31st December 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

As you may well have seen in the news, the Government announced yesterday afternoon that we need to further stagger the start of term to minimise the risk of infection.

The guidance is now stating that:

- **No children except those who fall into the Government criteria should be in school during the week beginning the 4th January 2021.**
- **All children will be in school from Monday 18th January.**
- **Monday 4th January is a planned INSET day as already discussed.**

During the second week of term, beginning on 11 January, we will start their programme of testing, prioritising staff, those students in schools and colleges and the exam cohorts. Schools and colleges will be able to bring students back to face-to-face tuition as testing is rolled out. Remote education will be provided to all pupils this week prior to return to school or college

Providing that the equipment and training arrives next week, it is our intention to begin **testing pupils in Year 11 from the week beginning 4th January** with the hope that we will be able to welcome back all Year 11 pupils to school in person from the week beginning 11th January and we therefore are prioritising this work. **Please be on standby for a notification to invite your child in for a test.**

The exact nature of the testing process is not yet fully clear. On Monday I will be sending parents an online consent form and further details of how we will engage with this at Test Valley will be shared throughout the week beginning the 4th January.

A number of parents have already kindly volunteered to support with the testing. **I am keen to hear from any other parents or carers who might also be able to volunteer some time to do this over the next three weeks.** As we will need to DBS all volunteers, time is short. **If you are able to support us with the testing (training will be provided) please could you contact me on wildent@testvalley.hants.sch.uk.**

While not in school, all pupils 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. Registers will be taken each lesson. **This includes tutor time.** The only exception to this is PE. 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.

Most online sessions during this time will be actual remote taught sessions by the class teacher. However, due to the need to test colleagues and also to set up testing for pupils, it will be necessary for some lessons to be resources only.

HEADTEACHER ▪ MS T. WILDEN B.A. (HONS)

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We have already contacted parents of pupils who, according to the Government criteria, should be physically in school. **For those children who are in school from Tuesday, they need to report to the Sports Hall first thing to be registered.** During the day they will be expected to engage with the online learning which all pupils will be receiving. **It is essential they have headphones with them to access this.**

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. In order to support us with setting up the testing we need as few children in school as possible for the first week.

We anticipate buses will run as normal.

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.

Happy New Year,

Toni Wilden
HeadTeacher.