

1st January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to wish you a Happy New Year and with important news regarding changes to arrangements for the start of term next week. This letter will provide information on Covid-19 testing in school, our remote learning arrangements, and who is due to return to school and when:

- **DfE ANNOUNCE FURTHER CHANGES TO THE START TO TERM**
- **RAPID MASS TESTING**
- **VOLUNTEERS TO HELP WITH MASS TESTING**
- **REMOTE ONLINE LEARNING FOR ALL STUDENTS from Tue 5th January**
- **TIER 4 RESTRICTIONS**
- **RETURN TO SCHOOL FOR YEAR 11 & 13 STUDENTS - 8.45am on Mon 11th January**
- **RETURN TO SCHOOL FOR YEAR 7, 8, 9, 10 & 12 – 8.45am on Mon 18th January**
- **IN THE EVENT OF EXTREME WEATHER**

DfE ANNOUNCE FURTHER CHANGES TO THE START TO TERM

- You will no doubt be aware that the government have declared that **all secondary schools will return to online educational provision with effect from the start of term**. In essence, **the physical return to school of students has been delayed by an additional week** compared to the arrangements outlined in my last letter, dated 18th December.
- This is because of concerns about the spread of a new variant of coronavirus. It is also to enable schools to organise 'rapid mass testing' for coronavirus.

'RAPID MASS TESTING'

- The government have also announced that all secondary schools are required to implement 'rapid mass testing' of staff and students using new, quicker COVID-19 tests known as 'lateral flow tests'. Along with the other protective measures we are taking, these tests will help staff and students to remain in school safely.
- Up to one third of people who have coronavirus experience no symptoms. By testing we will help find asymptomatic cases and break chains of transmission to stop the virus spread and help to keep our school open as safely as possible.
- Further details are emerging on a daily basis (7 new documents/resources were produced overnight) and more are expected over the next few days to inform our planning.
- The plan is that all students who have parental consent (up to age 15) or consent themselves via their parents (age 16 and over) are tested twice early in the term, so that we can prevent the virus taking hold in school. As things stand, we are intending for all students to be tested on either Mon 11th or Tue 12th, with second tests taken on either Thurs 14th or Fri 15th. Those students not in school that week will be expected to come into school just to be tested twice according to a rota, then go home.
- The test is voluntary, but I would encourage everyone to take it. I will write to you again next week including more detailed information about our testing arrangements and with a parental consent form for the testing which will require your response.

Stratford upon Avon School

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Mr N Wallace – Headteacher

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Stratford
Town Trust
at the heart of our community



- You may also have seen that the government have been asking for volunteers to help administer these tests, a theme that some newspapers have picked up on:



VOLUNTEERS TO HELP WITH MASS TESTING

At this point I would ask for any volunteers in our community who may be able to support this mass testing programme. Volunteers would need to be available from Monday 11th to Friday 15th January. The key roles are testing supervisors who may have to help swabbing and keeping the student side of the testing area clean, processors who take the swab and apply it to the testing kit and then recorders who log the results after 30 minutes. You will be provided with training materials so experience is not necessary. However, any medical or lab experience would be helpful for testing and processing and recorders need to be confident with technology and extremely organised as they may have to monitor up to 30 tests at a time. If you are available and willing please email Covid19@stratfordschool.co.uk.

- We are also likely to require some volunteers to help with Covid testing ongoing until restrictions have been removed from schools and society. The roles will be the same as above but the availability will need to be flexible as we are uncertain as to the scale required. If you are flexible in availability and willing to volunteer, please Covid19@stratfordschool.co.uk and stress that it is ongoing testing you can help with. Once again, I thank you for any support you can give.

REMOTE ONLINE LEARNING FOR ALL STUDENTS from Tuesday 5th January

From 8.50am on Tuesday 5th January, all students will be expected to log onto their class Teams and follow their regular daily timetable. Teachers will either provide live lessons via Teams at the time when they would ordinarily be teaching the class or upload other work if that is more appropriate. Teachers will be available 'live' during lessons and are contactable via the chat facility of Teams and by email if needed.

If your child has previously been identified as vulnerable or a child of approved key workers, then they are able to attend school and will be supervised in a bubbled room whilst they follow the same online learning that everyone else will be doing from home. However, given that our area, and most of the country, is in Tier 4 with instructions to stay at home and not leave or be outside of your home or garden except where you have a 'reasonable excuse', we are only expecting a small number of people to be in school next week.

TIER 4 RESTRICTIONS

May I remind you that government restrictions state:

"In general, you must not meet socially or carry out any activities with another person ... You should minimise time spent outside your home. When around other people, stay 2 metres apart from anyone not in your household – meaning the people you live with ... Where this is not possible, stay 1 metre apart with extra precautions (for example, wearing a face covering). You must not meet socially indoors with family or friends unless they are part of your household or support bubble. You can exercise or visit a public outdoor place:

- by yourself ...*
- or, when on your own, with 1 person from another household"*

[Tier 4: Stay at Home - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

Please reinforce this message with your child, particularly as and when they return to school.

RETURN TO SCHOOL FOR YEAR 11 & 13 STUDENTS - 8.45am on Monday 11th January (Week A)

GCSE & A LEVEL PPEs

Year 11 and Year 13 students will return and commence their Pre-Public Examinations (PPEs or mocks) as planned on Monday 11th January 2021. There are two exam sessions each day, each starting at 9am and 1.30pm. They will follow their usual timetable when they are not sitting examinations.

External examinations, including for Year 10 PE students, will continue as usual.

Students in other year groups will be expected to continue to log onto their class Teams and follow their regular daily timetable.

RETURN TO SCHOOL FOR YEAR 7, 8, 9, 10 & 12 – 8.45am on Monday 18th January (Week B)

Year 7, 9, 10 and 12 students are due to return and commence their normal timetabled lessons on Monday 18th January 2021.

Year 8 students will return and experience a rescheduled ‘Alternative Curriculum’ week. This is a vital opportunity to have lessons in specialist teaching spaces to broaden their KS3 experience exploring aspects of ‘Our World’ and help support option choices. As such, Y8 lessons will be replaced with half a day or longer experiences in Technologies, Performing Arts, Arts, Sciences, ICT subjects where students have not had access to specialist rooms this term. We will confirm detailed arrangements the week before.

Unfortunately, **the proposed Alternative Curriculum week for Year 7 has been postponed** as there will only be one week crossover with PPE examinations, reducing our capacity to reallocate specialist teaching spaces. After that, we will need to return to our original bubbled areas for all year groups.

IN THE EVENT OF EXTREME WEATHER

In the unlikely event that it does become necessary to close the school due to extreme weather, notices will be placed on our website www.stratforduponavonschool.com, sent by Twitter and Groupcall, and a verbal message placed on the switchboard (ring 01789 268051) by 6.45 a.m. at the latest. We also notify Warwickshire County Council, who place lists of all the county school closures on their website.

Thank you for your ongoing support as we all hope for normality to return sooner rather than later. With very best wishes for a safe, happy and successful New Year,

Yours sincerely,



Neil Wallace
Headteacher