

18th December 2020

Dear Parents\Carers,

I hope that this letter finds you and your family well and that you have had a positive start to the holiday period. It seems that the ink had not even dried on the previous letter we sent to you on Thursday before the government had made yet another announcement resulting in schools having to change their plans at the last minute – and as has become typical during a school holiday. This is the way of things right now as the situation with Covid-19 develops.

We are conscious of the need to keep up our regular communication with parents and carers so that you are always made aware of current developments and how they affect Highgate Wood. However, we will also try to pick our timings for communication carefully to ensure as far as possible that things do not become confusing and/or overwhelming during this period. I thank you in advance for your understanding.

You have probably heard the news that the government is asking schools to adopt a staggered return to school in January. In a press statement on Thursday afternoon (just moments after we had dismissed students for the end of term), Education Secretary Gavin Williams announced that most students should work remotely during the first week of term. Students in exam year groups, vulnerable children and children of critical workers will attend school for face-to-face lessons, but students in Year 7 to 10 and also Year 12, will be asked to remain at home and work remotely. (Please click [here](#) for details). Please note that for Highgate Wood School the students who will face-to-face be returning on the 4th January will be years 11 and 13 (as per the government's direction), but also some year 12 classes for those subjects that will be examined in the summer of 2021.

We believe that this is a good idea to help manage COVID-19 transmission in the community and also gives a little more time to meet the challenges of introducing the new coronavirus testing programme in schools (click [here](#) for details). Unfortunately, the information was released rather late for us to communicate it properly, and we are still awaiting further details for how we should plan the initiative precisely.

But I am writing to assure you that we are working closely with Public Health Haringey, the Department for Education and the local authority to ensure that we have a safe and successful start to the new term, and are ready to meet the new demands and requirements.

I am also taking this opportunity to provide an initial outline of the plans that we will now put in place for those first two weeks of the new term.

Highgate Wood School Student Council supports individual action to address the issues of Climate Change and promotes the United Nations top 10 recommendations.



5-minute showers



Drive less



Lights off



Local produce



Recycle



Meat-free meals



Zero-waste fashion



Unplug



Refill and reuse



Bring your own bag

FIRST WEEK OF THE NEW TERM (4th January 2021)

Children of Critical Workers

To ensure we have an up-to-date list of critical worker families we are asking all families falling into this category to make that declaration, and also let us know whether they need their children to be supervised in school for the week 4th – 8th January. Please [click here](#) to complete this declaration.

Children considered to be vulnerable

We will be contacting the families and carers of those children who are considered to be vulnerable to make appropriate arrangements for support for the week 4th – 8th January.

Students in Years 11 and 13 (and year 12 students studying subjects which will be examined in the summer of 2021 – more details to follow)

Students in these year groups will come into school as normal on Monday 4th January at 11:00am to follow their regular timetable in school, starting with tutor time.

Students in Years 7,8,9, 10 and 11

Students in these year groups will be asked to register on Google Classrooms on Monday 4th January at 11:00am to follow their regular timetable, with “live lessons” delivered by their teachers. Those eligible for Free School Meals will receive a supermarket voucher.

SECOND WEEK OF THE NEW TERM (11th January 2021)

We anticipate that all students will be in school for the week beginning Monday 11th January.

FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT COVID TESTING AND SCHOOL RETURN

More information will be circulated in the coming days. We already have planned updates for the website on remote learning, and information to share with students to help ensure they have the required information for accessing the remote learning provision we will have in place.

Before school returns, we will send further updates on what will be happening at the start of the new term and also for the implications of the planned Covid testing in schools. I can assure all families from the onset that nothing will happen without you being fully informed and for parental permission to have been received.

As always, we are responding to government guidance as quickly as we can and continue to remain fully focussed on the safety, education, well-being and happiness of your child.

Regards



Patrick Cozier
Headteacher