

1<sup>st</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

A happy new year to you all! I also hope that you have had the opportunity to enjoy the festive period with your families. It has certainly been a strange one for us all, and at HWS this culminated in an extraordinary staff meeting on New Year's Eve (such is the amazing dedication of our staff) to discuss our response to the recent announcement from the government about the arrangement for schools returning in January.

Following the revised guidance from the government I am writing to alert you to the things that I shared with staff yesterday about how these changes will impact on students at Highgate Wood School for the first few weeks of term. I do regret having to do this during the holiday period and have tried to keep the information as brief as possible, but given the importance of this information we felt it was important to communicate with you sooner rather than later. Fuller information will be shared once term begins.

The changes brought in are to help ensure that the process of lateral flow covid testing is successful and effective. These tests are voluntary, but we would encourage everyone to take part. The lateral flow tests support the identification of asymptomatic individuals, thus reducing the risk of transmission. Please be aware that they are designed for asymptomatic individuals only. If your child should have any covid-19 positive symptoms they should not come to school, but self-isolate and get tested by calling NHS 111 or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>

To allow for the setting up of lateral flow coronavirus testing in schools, there has been a delay to the start of term across the country. All students, with the exception of students who have been identified as vulnerable and those whose parents are critical workers, have been asked to remain at home, learning remotely, for the week 4<sup>th</sup>– 8<sup>th</sup> January. For our students that means they should follow their regular timetable on Google Classrooms attending lessons at the usual times, but online from home. We expect to be able to deliver most online learning as video lessons through Google Meet, though we will prioritise "live lessons" for those students in exam groups in Years 11, 12 and 13 where we need to do so. Students should register in their year group registration room on Google Classrooms at the regular time for school (11:00 am on Monday 4<sup>th</sup>, 8:30 am for the remainder of the week). As usual, please inform Mr Ashman if you have issues with access or connectivity ([tas@hws.haringey.sch.uk](mailto:tas@hws.haringey.sch.uk)).

If you are a critical worker and your child needs to be supervised in school you should have already completed the declaration. If you have not done so, could you please complete this as soon as possible by clicking [here](#). All students attending school (except those in the sixth form) must wear full school uniform and attend as if it were a regular day at school. Students will be supervised, with access to the same on-line learning that their peers at home will be engaged with.

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

From Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> January,

- we will be asking students in Year 11, Year 13 and also Year 12 students studying Criminology and BTEC science students, to come into school to attend lessons as normal.
- Vulnerable students and the children of critical workers who need supervision will continue to attend as before.
- Other students in Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12 will continue to work remotely, engaged in their learning on Google Classrooms. Where students are eligible for Free School Meals but are not in school, we will be issuing FSM vouchers.

In train with this staggered return to school, we will also begin our process of providing lateral flow tests for all staff and students. This is not compulsory and will require parental permission as well as the permission of the individual student. Details of this process will be circulated as soon as we can, with some information already available to families on the school website at <https://bit.ly/hwscovidnews>, but we are not yet in a position to be able to share more detail. We do know, however, that we may need the help of parent volunteers. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have put their names forward already. If you would like to help please sign up at <https://bit.ly/hwscv>

The week beginning Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January should allow us to have all children back, at the normal time, following their normal timetables in school.

Our plans are, of course, subject to change. We have made decisions based on the current Government guidance that schools will open, and tests, training and relevant resources will be delivered to us on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January. As more information becomes available, or Government policy changes, we may need to reconsider our approach.

Testing students and staff is an additional tool to support safety for all in for everyone at Highgate Wood School. However, it does not replace the safeguards and procedures we have established and will continue to operate in the school. We will continue to promote the importance of covid-19 safe behaviours and, in keeping with Tier 4 guidance, students will still be required to wear masks in the corridors and other communal areas.

We hope that our plans mean that our students benefit in terms of both academic progress and their mental health. However, the success of the testing scheme relies on every student and their family following Government advice when not in school. London is currently in Tier 4 and therefore we are asked to:

- Stay at home - no one should leave the home without a reasonable excuse such as going to work, essential shopping, or education.
- Do not attend social gatherings.
- Outdoor exercise should only be taken with other members of your household or with one person from another household, remaining socially distant.
- Wash hands regularly for at least 20 seconds.
- Wear a face covering where social distancing is difficult.
- Remain 2 metres apart from people you do not live with.

The full Tier 4 guidance can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tier-4-stay-at-home>

It remains important that families use our "hotline: **0208 342 7975** and our "hot email" [covid@hws.haringey.sch.uk](mailto:covid@hws.haringey.sch.uk) for reporting positive test results. When contacting us, please give the following information: students full name, the date covid specific symptoms first started, the date of the covid test and a contact number.

I take this opportunity to attach a revised Key Dates for the coming term. Currently we are intending all the events (Exams, Parents' Evenings etc) to take place as scheduled.

With my very best wishes for the coming New Year

Regards



Patrick Cozier  
Headteacher