

5th January 2021

Dear Parents\Carers

I hope that you and your families are well. Following my last letter to you on New Years' Day I find myself having to write to you again to respond to another shift in government policy. By now you will be aware of the announcement that was made on Monday evening by Boris Johnson declaring another national lockdown. The consequences of this are that schools will be closed to all students apart from those who are vulnerable or the children of critical workers until at least February half term. In this letter, I outline our response to this decision.

Remote Learning

Students will be working remotely on Google Classrooms from now until the February half term. These online lessons will follow their regular school timetable. It is important that students are enrolled in all their subject Google Classrooms and join that classroom at the correct time. Most lessons will be "live" on Google Meet, though there may be times when this is not possible (as most staff will be working from home and some will be managing their own childcare and family responsibilities alongside delivering their teaching). However, where this is the case, other activities will be set for the class. In accordance with the government guidance, we have asked staff to prioritise year 11 and year 13 lessons for live teaching, but I can reassure you that all year groups will get a good experience during this period.

Student Support

We will maintain our usual systems for pastoral care and learning support. Tutors and others from House team, as well as staff from Learning Support when appropriate, will maintain their links with families during this period of lock down – providing guidance and support as required.

Students should register in their year group Google Classroom every morning before 8:45am, ready to join their form group Google Classroom by 8.45am where they will be greeted by their form tutor. Lessons will begin at 9am. We will be contacting the families of those who have not been able to login to establish why.

In addition to the daily tutor time, we have also tutors to make contact with parents in the event that they wish to praise how well you child is doing or if they have any concerns. Our aim is to ensure that every parent receives at least one call from your child's form tutor between now and the end of the half term.

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



Similarly, our safeguarding team, led by Ms J. Burniston our DSL, will retain oversight of the safeguarding of all students. Please do contact Ms Burniston if you have any safeguarding concerns (jbu@hws.haringey.sch.uk).

If your child has an Education Health Care plan, they will receive support with engaging with their remote learning from our Learning Support Department. They will also provide support with any students who are attending our Small School. For any queries regarding this, please contact Mr Matt Dobrashian our SENCO (mdo@hws.haringey.sch.uk).

Small School

Our Small School will cater for students who have been identified as vulnerable, as well as the children of critical workers. This is already well established, with students working in their year group bubbles and engaging with the same online content of their peers at home as they follow their usual timetable. If you have any questions concerning Small School please contact Ms Burniston for Key Stage 3 (jbu@hws.haringey.sch.uk), Adrian Hartley for Key Stage 4 (aha@hws.haringey.sch.uk) and Lindsay Pinnick for Post 16 (lpi@hws.haringey.sch.uk).

We hope it will not be too long before we are able to provide families with guidance with regard to the public examinations in the summer for year 11 and year 13 (and some year 12s), which the government has confirmed will not now be going ahead as planned. We are currently formulating plans to try and ensure that we are best prepared for all likely eventualities. We will do everything possible to ensure that our students achieve the results that they deserve this summer. However, until there is a decision from Ofqual about what the alternative arrangements will be it would be prudent at this stage not to try and second guess what the outcome might be. We will update you as soon as we are able to.

We have rather more control over our own internal plans and we currently hope to retain the scheduled Parents Evenings, Options Evening, Information Evenings and “Taster Days” as they were. However, there are some changes that we have had to make. This includes a delay to the Year 13 mock examinations. I hope to be able to give you a clear idea of the schedule and events for the coming half term in my regular letter this weekend.

I would like to take the opportunity now to thank you for all your messages of support and good wishes at the start of this year, which has been a difficult one which nobody could have wished for. These have been invaluable in helping me and my amazing staff to maintain good spirits. Whilst there are some who predicted that we would be again in a period of school closure, there is no one who has welcomed it. We all know that the best place for children is their school, and we do hope we will return to that before long.

In the meantime, do take care and keep safe.

Regards



Patrick Cozier
Headteacher