

24th January 2021

Dear Parents\Carers,

As we enter the fourth week of most families having to work from home, I would like to begin by congratulating our students on maintaining their energy, commitment and enthusiasm for their schoolwork. We fully appreciate how difficult it can be, so it is with real pleasure that I have been able to “drop in” to some remote classes and see students happy, engaged and working hard. It is a tribute to both my wonderful staff, and to our supportive families - as well as the students themselves - that this is happening.

There is a developing sense that an end to lockdown straight after half-term is unlikely, but we continue to move forward with school life, preparing for when all students return to school. Thank you to those parents who attended our most recent information events for the year 11 and year 13 cohorts at this uncertain time regarding the summer exams. I do hope that you found these events useful.

In addition, there are important deadlines approaching. Year 9 students need to complete their Option choices for 1st February, and this is also the final date for applications to Highgate Wood School Sixth Form. We have a number of virtual parents’ evenings on the horizon (Year 13 on 9th February, Year 7 on 16th March and Year 12 on 30th March), and the PSA will be running their General Meeting, where I have been invited to speak to all families about the school’s Covid response, on Thursday 11th February. Further details about these events will be circulated shortly. **Please also be aware that school (both “small school” and virtual school) will be closed for a staff training INSET day on Monday 1st February.**

Covid-19 Testing

Gavin Williamson, the Secretary of State for Education, announced this week that schools will get at least two weeks’ notice prior to return. This is to enable us to conduct the rapid Covid-19 amongst staff and students before they come back. The expectation is that all students and members of staff will have been tested twice prior to returning to school. However, once we are back in school, there will be no routine testing for students. The plan from the government to introduce rapid flow testing for students who come into close contact with another student or member of staff who has tested positive has been paused. This means that if student or member of staff is identified as a close contact, they will have to isolate as before. We will explain this in more detail nearer to the time we are due to return.

Whilst I know there has been some discussion in the press around this Covid-19 testing programme, I would still encourage all families to please visit [these pages](#) on the school website

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

for information and give consent for your child to be tested by following [this link](#). We would like to be as ready as possible when the time comes.

Remote Learning

We continue to review and develop our online provision to help students and support families, which includes compiling the [remote learning overviews](#) that I announced in my last letter. During the coming week we are providing more structure to the morning tutor times, so please remind your child to register in their yeargroup registration room in the morning, before 8:45, and then go to their online tutor room (except on Wednesday where there are assemblies for Key Stage 3 and 4, or Mondays for students at post 16). Currently we are looking at whether we are able to adjust the timings of the day to make it easier for students at home and I will let you have more information about this in due course. We are also receiving some valuable feedback from students, parents and staff about the impact of the amount of screen time that is currently required to run remote learning the way that we have chosen to. We will be reviewing this concern and will inform you if this leads to any changes to our approach. Whilst we are very pleased with the very positive feedback we have had about the success of the live lessons, we are also mindful of getting the balance right between the continuation of learning and the promotion of good health and well-being.

On that subject, we are aware that this is an exceptionally challenging time for many. The avenues of support available to families which I included in last week's letter, have now been added to our support pages on the school website. These can be accessed [here](#).

Please continue to alert Mr Ashman (tas@hws.haringey.sch.uk) if you have any issues regarding access to the remote learning, Ms Chaudhri (sci@hws.haringey.sch.uk) with any concerns regarding the content or provision and Ms Burniston (ibu@hws.haringey.sch.uk), our designated safeguarding lead, should you have any significant safeguarding concerns.

Wishing you all the best for the coming week.

Take care and stay safe

Regards



Patrick Cozier
Headteacher