



5th January 2021

Dear Parent / Carer,

I wrote to you last week following the Government's announcement just before the New Year about when pupils would return to school this term.

I am sorry to be writing to you again so soon on this subject. However, as you may have seen, yesterday the Prime Minister announced a new national lockdown because of rising infection rates of Covid-19 and to try to prevent the further spread of the virus.

As part of this, all primary schools, secondary schools and colleges in England are to be closed from today until at least the end of half-term in February, except for children of key workers or vulnerable children. Early years settings remain open.

The Prime Minister also announced that "not all exams" would go ahead as normal this year and that there would be alternative arrangements. He said the Government would set out further details on this at a later date, and when that information is announced, we will update parents of students due to take exams this year.

From today:

If you or your partner is a key worker, or if your child is classed as vulnerable, then the school will remain open, as now, and we look forward to seeing them in school tomorrow and beyond as normal for teaching and learning. If this applies to you and you wish your child to be part of this group, please complete our Critical Worker Survey on our website at: <https://georgesalter.com/news/2021/1/4/critical-workers-application-january-2021>

For information on those listed by the Government as vulnerable or a key worker please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

As you know, we have worked incredibly hard since the start of the pandemic in March to keep our school as safe as possible, and I would like to take this opportunity to remind you of the safety measures in place at our school:

- All students and staff must wear a face covering in communal areas, unless exempt
- Everyone is expected to remain in their allocated bubbles
- Students are encouraged to wash their hands regularly throughout the day

Please note we are trying to work with windows open in classrooms for ventilation. As the cold days have returned, and with the need for ventilation in mind, pupils may need a few more layers of clothing underneath their Academy uniform.

For all other pupils, our school is closed until at least the end of the February half-term. High-quality remote learning will be provided to make sure they continue to receive a consistent education. We know that this places pressure on you at a difficult time but your support in helping your child engage with the remote learning packs as much as possible is so important and we are very grateful for it. All pupils are required to be online on Microsoft TEAMS at 8.40 a.m. each morning for their live form group session. In this session their tutor or Progress Leader will ensure they are set up for their day of lessons. Live lessons throughout the day follow each individual student's timetable.

I am aware that in some households there might be only one device for a number of students. Please note that many mobile phones can enable access to Microsoft TEAMS and that, failing this, all lessons are recorded so students can access these at any time. If access to a device and Microsoft TEAMS is not possible, please contact your child's Progress Leader who will arrange for paper copies of work to be posted out to you. All work should be completed in books, where students have them, and alternatively on paper if not.

If students have concern about their work or their welfare they can contact their Form Tutor via TEAMS, or their Progress Leader. For more immediate and urgent support relating to a safeguarding concern, students can go to the Academy website and click on the Sharp System tab where they can see a variety of support organisations and leave and urgent request for help.

We will continue to stay in touch with you on this matter, and about your child's education. However, do let me know if you would like to discuss this matter, or if you require any support relating to these new arrangements.

Furthermore, this week we have sent you a letter requesting your consent for your child to be tested for the Coronavirus as part of the programme of testing that all schools were being asked to undertake in January. We anticipate that this testing is likely to still take place but at a later date. Therefore, please keep the consent form safe until the school re-opens for your child.

I would once again like to take this opportunity to thank you wholeheartedly for your understanding and ongoing support in helping us to manage this unprecedented situation. Please continue to take care and to stay safe.

Yours sincerely,



Mr A. Price

Principal

George Salter Academy