

1st January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

First and foremost I would like to wish all the school community a Happy New Year.

Urgent update to start of term / testing

Further to my letter dated 19th December the start of term has changed again, as was announced by the DFE on 30th December 2020.

Therefore the following arrangements (as of Friday 1st January 2021) will be in place, these may be subject to change.

4th January

This is now a staff only day. All students must remain at home.

5th – 8th January

All Years groups remain at home and continue with their learning remotely.

Any student **in any year group** that is classified as vulnerable or has an EHC plan should be in school this week. We will contact these parents and students on Monday 4th January. Parents who are keyworkers and would like their child to attend school for this week should telephone the main school office on Monday 4th January or email post@wexham.slough.sch.uk providing evidence of employment.

11th – 15th January

Years 11 and 13 to start school. Normal times and normal classes.

All other students in Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12 must stay at home and continue with their learning remotely.

EHC plan, Vulnerable and Keyworker students can continue to attend school.

18th January

All students return to school as normal.

All the current rules and regulations, such as facemasks, staggered end to the day etc. will remain in place in January.

Primarily this change is to enable schools to set up the publicised testing programme the DFE wanted all schools to launch on the 4th January. Wexham School agrees that testing is a good way forward, in order to keep our students and staff safe and to ensure maximum attendance at school. However, the very late announcement and now constantly changing details about the scheme is proving difficult to have any certainty about when this will actually begin. Obviously we hope to have this in place before Year Groups return. I will write (via the post) with more specific details about the scheme and the consent forms from 4th January.

Many details that have currently appeared in the media are incorrect. In the interest of transparency I feel it important to share exactly what we do or do not know at this stage.

- The government intends to test students **from** the 4th January, this does not necessarily mean that testing will take place during the first week back, although obviously that is the intention for students in school.

- Testing for both students and staff is **optional**. Students **MUST** have consent from parents if they are under 16. Teachers do not have to take the test unless they want to and I expect many will.
- It is our employees or volunteers who will supervise testing, not the army. This area is proving problematic for many schools as reported in the media.
- We have been told tests and PPE will be delivered from 4th January.
- We do not know where these tests will take place. Following the NHS guidance we have received the only place we have identified which meets the criteria is our School Canteen, clearly this would not be appropriate and as so many schools will be similar I expect guidance to change.

I apologise for the late notice of these arrangements due to the ongoing changes announced by the DFE.

Yours sincerely



Mr Lawrence Smith
Headteacher