

1st January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

Important update - arrangements for January 2021 – first two weeks of term

I hope that you and your family enjoyed a peaceful and safe Christmas.

My letter today includes important information relating to when your child will return to school at the start of this coming term.

You will have seen media coverage of recent government announcements for secondary schools in January. The Government has advised that secondary schools in England should not fully re-open to all students and staff in the first two weeks of term (weeks commencing 4 and 11 January 2021).

I do appreciate that these changes come at short notice but we continue to follow all Government guidance on COVID-19 in order to safeguard our students, staff and wider school community.

I would like to update you on our plans, following these latest announcements. We will provide as much face-to-face teaching as we can, to support students who have upcoming external examinations. We have put a full programme of remote learning in place for all other children.

A full breakdown by year group is provided overleaf. In summary:

- On **Monday 4th January**, the school will be closed for all students for a staff training day.
- School will be open from **Tuesday 5th January** for:
 - Vulnerable children in all year groups
 - Children of critical key workers in all year groups
- School will be open from **Monday 11 January** for all students in **Year 11 and Year 13**
- School will be open **for all** students from **Monday 18 January**.
- External exams due to take place between 4th January and 15th January will go ahead as planned.

All other students will receive their learning remotely for the first two weeks of term. Students are expected to engage fully with their timetabled remote learning and I thank you for your support with this.

We will welcome all students back to school for face-to-face teaching from week commencing **18th January 2021**.

Students are well practised in accessing our remote learning offer through MS teams. If you would like an update or refresher on how to access remote learning, please review our guide to remote learning via <https://www.garforthacademy.org.uk/online-academy>.

We are currently awaiting further guidance on the government's plans for voluntary testing in schools. We hope that this will be a positive development, to allow us to minimise the disruption to staff and students and maintain as much in person teaching and learning as possible. We will update you as soon as we can, as more information is provided by the government.

I would like to thank all members of our school community for their support and wish you and your families a happy and safe New Year.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs A Young - Principal

For **Tuesday 5th January – Friday 15th January only**, the following arrangements will be in place:

- **Year 7, 8, 9 + 10** – Remote learning. A full timetable of remote learning activities will be provided for Tuesday 5th January to Friday 15th January. You can access this via MS teams. Your child is required to engage fully with all activities included in their timetable and I would like to thank you for your support in this. They will return to school on Monday 18th January.
- **Year 11 + 13** - For Tuesday 5th January – Friday 8th, a full timetable of remote learning will be in place. Students should report to the academy as normal from Monday 11th January to benefit from face-to-face teaching. Any external exams due to take place during the week commencing 4th January will continue as planned. Arrangements for these exams and any preparation sessions will be communicated to students on 4th January.
- **Year 12** - Remote learning. A full timetable of remote learning activities will be provided for Tuesday 5th January to Friday 15th January. You can access this via MS teams. Your child is expected to engage fully with all activities included in their timetable and I would like to thank you for your support in this. They will return to school on Monday 18th January. Any external exams due to take place during 4th January and 15th January will continue as planned. Arrangements for these exams and any preparation sessions will be communicated to students on 4th January.
- **Vulnerable children and children of critical workers** – Provision will be made for students to attend the academy as normal from Tuesday 5th January. You can find more information about this via the following link. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>. Please contact your child's Learning Manager via email on Monday 4th January if you feel your child meets these criteria and you would like them to attend. Please be aware that this provision must be pre-arranged via the Learning Manager and students should not attend on Tuesday 5th January unless this has been pre-arranged.