

18 December 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re: Additional Measures during Covid-19 Pandemic – please read carefully

I recognise that I am writing to you much sooner than anticipated. As you may be aware, on Wednesday the Government announced plans for secondary schools to test all students and staff on a weekly basis for coronavirus. Last night, the Government also announced that as part of their plan to establish effective arrangements for testing, only final year examination students should attend school for the first week of term and that all other year groups should move to on-line learning and remote provision. Children of key workers and vulnerable students are also invited to attend school if parents and carers so wish them to do.

Tuesday 5th January – Friday 8th January

To support families with their planning for the first week back, I can confirm that:

- Year 11 students will follow their normal taught lessons in school;
- We will move to Google Classroom for Years 7-10 to set remote lessons for our students following their usual timetable. We envisage each year group having at least one 'live' lesson per subject;
- There will be a 'virtual' year group assembly for Years 7-10 on Tuesday morning to explain the arrangements for the week;
- If your child does not have access to a device that will enable them to access the materials provided by staff please contact us **on 4th January** via beccles@seckfordeducation.org.uk so that we can make alternative provision for them;
- We will provide more detailed information and support before the start of term once we have had more time to process this announcement and meet with all staff.

Children of key workers and vulnerable students

The Government's definition of 'vulnerable students' can be found here: [Schools and childcare settings: return in January 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/schools-and-childcare-settings-return-in-january-2021) under 'Schools with secondary age students'. The definition of a key worker remains unchanged.

Parents and carers of students in these groups are invited to complete the form via ParentMail if they wish their child to attend school during the first week back in January. This is so that we can make appropriate arrangements in line with our Covid risk assessment. This form will be issued via ParentMail shortly.

As we did during the first national lockdown, in-school provision is likely to be supervised access to Google Classroom and remote learning rather than face-to-face teaching. This is so that we can run separate and year group specific key worker/vulnerable student bubbles as well as the Year 11 bubble.

Testing

Senior staff have met this morning to read and process all of the additional planning documents that relate to how we will manage both the first week back as well as how to get testing up and running as soon as possible. This is quite an undertaking and will require us, for example, to have more staff as 9 additional roles are needed to run on-site mass testing.

As a first step - and to support us during the first week back, please would any parents/carers who are able to volunteer and support us with the lateral flow testing **from Tuesday 5th – Friday 9th January** please contact us by **lunchtime** on **Monday 21st December** via hrayner@seckfordeducation.org.uk. This will allow us to liaise with you and to process all safeguarding and DBS checks.

Parents and carers can also be assured that there will be more information to follow as soon as we have it regarding parental consent for tests, how the testing will work and how we will run this in the school. **No tests will be performed without consent and we will share with you all of the Government documentation once it is complete.**

Finally....

Whilst the timing of the Government's announcement is not ideal, we are only allowing ourselves to focus on the positives.

The Government's intention is to keep all schools and all students safe and we will continue to do all that we can to support this and to support you as parents and carers whilst providing the very best we can for your children.

With your continued support we know that we will overcome the initial challenges in setting all of this up and you can rely upon us to act as quickly as we can.

Yours sincerely,



Heidi Philpott
Head of School



Mark Barrow
Chief Executive Officer