



Spalding High School

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Headmistress Mrs M Anderson B.Ed

31st December 2020

Dear parents, carers and students,

I very much hope that you have had a Merry Christmas and the opportunity for a rest.

As you are aware from the School Bulletin sent home to everyone on the last day of the Christmas Term (17th December), the Government had announced that day that the return to secondary school in January would be staggered. We were told that Year 11 and Year 13 were to return to school on Monday 4th January, with students in other year groups completing a week of remote learning and returning to school on Monday 11th January.

On Wednesday 30th December, we received a further update from the Secretary of State for Education changing this arrangement.

He has confirmed the following:

4th -8th January – no students in school other than key worker children and vulnerable students. Lessons for all students are to be delivered remotely.

11th – 15th January – key worker children and vulnerable students with Year 11 and Year 13 in school, along with the introduction of student testing. Remote learning for students in Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12 to continue.

18th January – All students to return to on-site learning, along with the introduction of mass testing.

He also made it clear that this timeline would remain under review and may be subject to change.

Remote Learning.

As detailed above, remote learning for **all** year groups will take place from Monday 4th January. Several media outlets are reporting that schools are closed and that the start of term has been delayed until 18th January. This is not a true representation. The directive from the Department of Education makes it clear that remote learning must take place during the staggered return to on-site learning.

Work and lessons will be scheduled via Microsoft Teams. Students must follow their normal timetabled lessons, some of which will be live streamed, for all, if not part of the lesson. The week beginning Monday 4th January is a Week 2 timetable. Please see the School Bulletin (17.12.20) on the school website for further information about remote learning.

Mass Covid-19 testing in schools.

Students will have access to testing prior to their return to lessons and on a weekly basis thereafter. We will be in touch with parents about this during the first week of the January term. Schools are being asked to organise and implement mass student testing with support from volunteers, including parents. Please be aware that contrary to some media coverage, the plans do not involve the armed forces conducting the testing in schools. Military support is for virtual training and webinars. We estimate we will need approximately ten volunteers to implement testing. If you would like to volunteer to train and assist with testing, please contact the enquiries@spaldinghigh.lincs.sch.uk email with your details.

Key worker children and vulnerable children.

The School Bulletin (17th December) is still available on the school website. Any key worker parent/parent of a vulnerable student who wishes their child to attend school between 4th January – 15th January, needs to follow the procedures explained in the bulletin and send their details to enquiries@spaldinghigh.lincs.sch.uk no later than Saturday 2nd January.

Parents who have already contacted the school for a place for their child should have received a confirmation email from me. If you have not received this confirmation, please resend your email as it has not been received.

All parents who have applied for a key worker child/vulnerable child place will be sent a further letter today detailing the arrangements for attending school during this fortnight.

Transport.

The most up to date information that we have received from the Transport Department is that the designated school transport buses are running to their normal timetable. Please check the bus company websites or social media feeds for the most up to date information. Those travelling on privately organised transport and taxis should contact their private provider.

Tiers.

Lincolnshire has now been moved into Tier 4. However, travel for education purposes is one of the permitted forms of travel both within tiers and between tiers. As soon as the different year groups are permitted to return to on site learning, we look forward to welcoming students back in school.

Year 11 and Year 13.

We expect to be in touch during the first week back with further details for your return to school on Monday 15th January and provide an update on Covid testing arrangements.

As Year 11 are not due to return to school until the week beginning 11th January, we will defer the Saturday Geography enrichment class, which was scheduled for 9th January to a date later in the term. Providing the government do not delay the start dates again, we intend to go ahead with the Saturday enrichment programme from Saturday 16th January.

We very much hope that students will make the most of this period of remote learning and engage fully with their lessons and teachers via Microsoft Teams. There will be additional work that students can do at home during this time such as consolidating their understanding of topics, sorting out their books and folders, finishing tasks and, for Years 11 and 13, with their assessment week after the February half term, preparation notes and revision.

We recognise that this delayed return is something that none of us wanted. Despite the challenges of Terms 1 and 2, students worked hard, achieved much and were well supported by staff and parents. I know that we were all hopeful that we would be able to continue with our on-site learning from as early in January as possible. However, I am sure, given the rising numbers and the new strain we can all appreciate why the Government have taken the actions they have. Whilst the new strain has presented yet another challenge, the news regarding another vaccine surely gives us hope for improvements in the coming weeks and months.

I wish you all a very happy and healthy New Year and indeed hope we can all look forward to a better and brighter 2021.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Anderson
Headmistress