

18 December 2020



Dear Parent/Guardian

Well, this has been a tough old time for people in our corner of the world and there is no denying it. I'm not sure things will be any easier in January either – but between then and now there is Christmas. Whatever your religion or beliefs I hope you are able to get some rest over the break and some quality time with loved ones, even if things are a little smaller and quieter this year.

You may well have seen the news about the Government's plan to establish testing facilities in all secondary schools in January, which we first heard about on Wednesday. This is enormously complicated – if every student and member of staff is to be tested in school once a week, that means we would need to organise, conduct and process the results of about 320 tests every day – and that does not include the additional daily testing that would be required when there are positive results in the school community. In keeping with most, if not all, other schools we do not yet know where we would be able to accommodate this facility or how we could staff such a thing. The Government has said that we should use January the 4th as an INSET day to plan for this, and that, for all of that first week back, only Year 11, Year 13 and vulnerable students/children of key workers will be in school and all other students will be doing remote learning. On Friday the 8th of January we will also run a one-off intensive revision day for the students who have exams:

So to be clear:

- **Monday the 4th of January** – no students in school, this is an extra INSET day granted by the Government.
- **Tuesday the 5th of January** – Friday the 8th of January inclusive:
 - Year 11 and Year 13 in school
 - Other Year groups will be required to learn at home
 - Vulnerable students/children of key workers will be in school where they will do their remote learning here under supervision. This will be by invitation only. Please keep an eye out for an email about this on the 4th of January when we will arrange who those students will be.
- **Thursday the 7th and Friday the 8th of January** – in addition to the above, students in Year 12 who are due to sit an external exam in IT, Finance, Sport or Health and Social Care, and students in Year 10 who are due to sit an external exam in Sport or Child Development will be invited in for an intensive revision day. Please watch out for individual emails on the 4th of January with further details about these days for the affected students.
- **Monday the 11th of January** - all students return to school.

On a personal note, I would like to say thank you to you all. I have been overwhelmed by the huge amount of messages of support from so many of you; in my six years as Headteacher at Sandwich Technology School I have never had such a large quantity of positive feedback. This has been an exceptionally difficult time for us all, but your messages of support have kept me going. Thank you.

Finally, I would like to wish you all, on behalf of all the staff and governors, a very Merry Christmas and let's hope for a better new year.

Yours faithfully

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