



31 December 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you had an enjoyable Christmas, despite the current COVID-19 restrictions.

As you will no doubt be aware, yesterday's government briefing detailed the outline for schools' reopening in January 2021 and plans for the NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 testing for staff and students. In College we are working on detailed plans for both issues and will send further information to you as soon as we are able to do so.

I wanted to write today to stress the importance of students understanding that they will be returning to education from **Tuesday 5 January** as planned, whether it be on-site or via remote learning and not, as some media reports might suggest, gaining an extra 1-2 weeks' holiday.

Regarding schools' reopening, the Government has announced that secondary schools and colleges will re-open on a phased basis, as below. Please note the date of on-site return for your child(ren):

Monday 4 January is a pre-published INSET Day. Staff will be focusing on a pre-planned agenda of providing excellence for our potentially disadvantaged and vulnerable students. They will also be using this time to plan for the requirements for remote learning as set out in our protocols. Details of what to expect from remote learning can be found on the Covid page of our website under Contingency Planning: [https://www.heathfieldcc.co.uk/?page\\_id=2092035](https://www.heathfieldcc.co.uk/?page_id=2092035)

From 5 January, students will follow their timetable of lessons as normal online if they are not in College. They must be up in time to start learning at the start of the school day. Students should be aware that work completed will be monitored and, as previously stated, students not completing work will be deemed "vulnerable" under government guidance and expected in College to be supported with their work.

On 4 January, Senior Team and support staff will be finalising the details of the provisional plans for the unresolved issues relating to testing and the start of term. All staff, unless exempt, will be in school from Monday 4 January or Tuesday 5 January.

- **If your child is classed as vulnerable your child should return to the school site on Tuesday 5 January. Equally, if you or your partner is a key worker your child is able to return to school site on Tuesday 5 January** (government guidance advises they do so). We have lists of who this applies to, do contact us at [office@heathfieldcc.co.uk](mailto:office@heathfieldcc.co.uk) if you feel your circumstances have changed. Students will be kept in strict year group bubbles. Outside of school, they must continue to adhere to local tier restrictions.



**Distinguished School**

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Headteacher: Ms Caroline Barlow B.A. (Hons)

- **If your child is taking public examinations exams this academic year (which includes all those in Year 11 and Year 13), your child should return to the school site on Monday 11 January.** Your child is expected to engage fully with their remote learning during the week of 4 January so that they keep up with their education. They will receive face-to-face teaching in school from 11 January and will be kept in strict bubbles. Outside of school, they must continue to adhere to local tier restrictions. Unfortunately, we do not currently envisage being able to safely accommodate Year 10 or Year 12 in addition however we will keep this under review.
- **If your child is in Years 7, 8, 9, 10 or 12 your child should return to school on Monday 18 January.** Your child is expected to engage fully with their remote learning *from Tuesday 5 January and during the week of 11 January* so that they keep up with their education. They will receive face-to-face teaching in school from 18 January and will be in strict year group bubbles. Outside of school, they must continue to adhere to local tier restrictions.

We have been informed that buses will run a normal service from 11 January. The normal Covid restrictions whilst travelling will apply.

Unresolved issues which we continue to work on:

- The logistical issues relating to testing all year groups before 11 or 18 January remain as set out in my letter of 18 December; we still await the tests, training details and resolution to transport issues. Thank you to all who have volunteered already to support the initial testing, we will be in touch next week when we have worked through the details.
- Thank you to those who have already completed the consent form, however this may need to be replaced as the government subsequently sent out templates we will need to match. We will be in touch next week as appropriate.
- Arrangements for external and mock exams during the spring term may need to be altered, we are assured external exams will continue as expected (at least for now).

To reiterate, further, more detailed communications regarding both the return to school and COVID-19 testing within school will follow shortly once plans have been put in place. **It is all of course, subject to further change in the light of local R-rates and government advice which will be reviewed before 18 January.**

Can I reiterate to you at this time, that whilst we may not have all the answers immediately at this stage, we will do what we always do and work towards the best solutions for our community. We want students in College learning, we want to be able to teach, we want people to be safe. To that end we will work together towards solving the logistical and educational problems that present. We will communicate the next steps to you as soon as we are able, that may not always be immediately but it will be as swift as we are able.

Much of what we are being asked to do is unusual, because we are living in unusual times. However, it is achievable due to the combination of the talent of our staff, the commitment of students and parents and the continued hard work of our leadership team and support staff to make and implement decisions that work for us. Together we remain a formidable team. Please continue to be patient with us as we work through the details of what comes next.

If you have any questions in the meantime, please contact [office@heathfieldcc.co.uk](mailto:office@heathfieldcc.co.uk).

Thank you again for your patience and understanding and best wishes for a Happy New Year.

Yours sincerely



**MS C BARLOW**  
Headteacher