

Our Ref: SLT/FSC-3112WSL

Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope you have managed to have a restful break. Nationally, the picture remains gloomy as the new Covid-19 variant takes hold and we are now seeing daily deaths reaching 1,000 people again as we saw in the worst days in Spring. The implications for schools are serious as the new variant seems to spread quickly amongst teenagers.

Yesterday saw the government produce new guidance on the reopening of schools in January. [You can read this guidance for yourselves here.](#) Headlines of this guidance are as follows:

- schools should take time in the week commencing 4<sup>th</sup> January to prepare to deliver testing of staff and students
- in the week commencing 4<sup>th</sup> January, secondary schools should only provide on-site education to vulnerable children and children of critical workers, and prioritise remote education to those in exam years
- in the week commencing 11<sup>th</sup> January, secondary schools should provide on-site education to vulnerable children, children of critical workers and those in exam years, and provide remote education to all other students
- from Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January, all students should return to on-site education

Again, schools have received no warning of these changes and, as has been the case throughout the crisis, there is no direct communication to schools from the government - we as school leaders are left watching the news and scouring the internet for information in the same way that I'm sure you have been doing.

**As far as we know, all school transport should be running as usual from Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January to allow the students who should be in school to attend.**

**Vulnerable students in all year groups will be in school from Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January.** These include all of our nurture students in our Discover classes in Year 7 and 8 and Headway students. The school keeps a record of all of our vulnerable students and these will be contacted by us directly so everyone in this category will know that they are expected to be in school and we have allocated them a place.

**Critical worker children from all year groups will also be expected to be in school from Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January.** There is no new definition of what constitutes a critical worker so we will use the same definition of critical worker as we used for the initial lockdown - these are children where both parents (or the parent in a single parent household) are working in a critical industry or public service. Thank you to all parents and carers of critical worker children who completed the online form before Christmas. All of these parents will be contacted individually to let them know the arrangements for their child(ren) for next week.

**Headway Alternative Provision students will also be expected to be in school from Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January.** Their timetables will be as normal from Monday with their usual start and finish times, as specified by Mr Wilson-Walsh.

All students who will be on site are expected to wear full school uniform as normal, with their blazer worn over their PE kit on days when they have a PE lesson.

The guidance states that children eligible for Free School Meals who are not back in school until the 11<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> January should be offered a food parcel. When we have offered these previously, available to be collected from the main reception, the take up has been really low. We will still offer this service and encourage those eligible to come into school to pick up this parcel. It hasn't been possible to liaise with our caterers for details on this so we will provide more information to the families directly affected next week. Remember, we do provide details of where families can go for extra support on our website, [which you can access here](#). For those students who will be in school, food will be available, although the service may be limited as the caterers cannot be expected to provide their usual menu when only 5% of students are present.

**The exam boards confirmed yesterday that all January exams will run as normal.** The exam timetable for January is below. Therefore, students in Year 10 and Year 11 who have exams will be expected to come into school to sit their exams on the dates and at the times specified. They should arrive in school 10-15 minutes before the published start time of the exam and will need to leave site after the exam has finished. They will not need to wear school uniform when they are only on site for an exam. We will be providing additional support for these students in preparation for their exams. The day before each exam we will provide five hours of supervised online teaching and support and it will be compulsory for all students involved to attend. There are also many resources provided by our teachers to support students preparing for the exams, such as the Sport Science website, [which can be found here](#).

DATE	TIME	LENGTH	EXAM
Thursday 7 <sup>th</sup> January 2021	8:45AM	1:00 1:15 E/T	21512E BTEC Music "The Music Industry" Year 11
Friday 8 <sup>th</sup> January 2021	12:30PM	1:30 1:53 E/T	UV21578 Online Hair & Beauty Exam Year 11
Monday 11 <sup>th</sup> January 2021	8:45AM	1:00 1:15 E/T	R041/01 OCR Risk of Sport Injury Year 10 & Year 11
Thursday 14 <sup>th</sup> January 2021	8:45AM	1:30 1:53E/T	5569UB01 WJEC Hospitality & Catering Year 11

### Remote Education

The government guidance states that remote learning should only happen for Year 11 students next week. This is not acceptable to us at Baysgarth. Too much learning has been lost already as a result of this pandemic and we want to ensure all of our students have school work to complete whilst they are not in school.

More details will emerge on Monday, but we hope to be able to offer work for students to complete in every subject in every year group. All of our staff will be in school as normal and whilst leaders will be occupied setting up the testing regime, we expect our teachers to be providing our usual excellent service to our students.

So far we have not provided any live lessons and all work has been provided through Google Classroom. However, in those subjects with exams over the next fortnight we will be completing live sessions to help prepare students for these exams and, provided that this works well, we

may roll out more live lessons during the next fortnight. There will be further details and the expectations for students engaging in these sessions circulated on Monday.

We have worked hard with our community to make sure that all of our families can access remote learning from home. We have lent out laptops, Chromebooks and internet dongles so that there are no excuses for not being able to work from home. If your child(ren) still cannot access remote learning, we urge you to get in touch with the school on Monday and we will attempt to provide a short term solution. Our Chromebook leasing scheme will provide a longer term solution and more details will be released on this in the next fortnight.

## Testing

The government guidance confirms that those students in school next week will not be tested for Covid-19 and that testing will be rolled out in the week beginning 11<sup>th</sup> January. As a school, we have not been given any training on testing yet - all we have seen is the guidance the government has published for schools. [You can read this guidance for yourselves here](#), and you can view the leaflet that has been produced to help students prepare for the test [here](#). Students will carry out the test themselves, with an adult present to help them. The expectation is that this training, together with the testing kits, will arrive in school next week, giving us a week to set up the testing regime. We will write to you about this next week, and we will need explicit consent to test your child(ren), which we will ask for via an online form.

The guidance also says that all students should be tested during the week beginning 11<sup>th</sup> January, even though most students will not be returning to school until the 18<sup>th</sup> January. At present, we are not clear how this will happen but we will write to you with more information next week when we know more.

Clearly, we are finding things out on a daily basis and will continue to communicate with you frequently so that you have all the information you need to support your child and the school to make these arrangements work for our families and this community.

Thank you for your continued support and we wish all our families a very Happy New Year!

Yours faithfully



Richard Briggs  
Head Teacher