

16th December 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Re: Start of term 2022 (Including specific testing arrangements)

I hope you have all enjoyed a wonderful term and are keeping safe and well. From the outset, I must advise you that this is a very lengthy letter that contains important reminders about our arrangements for the new term. Thank you for kindly taking the time to read through this and please be assured that we will go through all these details, carefully, with our students in school on their first few days back with us. Our extended tutor time on the first couple of days will help to support this.

COVID-19 Testing

The government has advised that all pupils should have one Lateral Flow Test before returning to school. As a result, I have had to stagger the start of term arrangements to ensure we can carry out the testing quickly and safely. Consent forms were circulated to all parents and carers last week, and I am grateful to you for your swift response to this. We do not want to delay the start to school for anyone and we will begin testing students, who have given consent, on Tuesday 4th January. I realise this is before the published start of term for some year groups, but it is the only way we can get the students through with minimal disruption to learning. If you are unable to attend due to other commitments, we will arrange an alternative for catch up.

Students will administer the test themselves, under the supervision of trained staff, in the same way as when these tests were completed previously in September. Year group testing, for those that have given consent, will take place on the following dates and students will be advised of their tutor group timings by their tutor during tutor time.

Date	Year group	Testing Time	Notes
Tuesday 4 th January	13 and 12	13:00 – 14:00	Y13, Y12 & Y11 to return home after their test.
	11	14:00 – 15:00	
Wednesday 5 th January	10 and 7	Y10 – P1 and P2 Y7 – P3 and P4	Y11, Y10 & Y7 in normal lessons. Y13 & Y12 to arrive at 11:15am ready for P3. Y9 and Y8 remote learning.
Thursday 6 th January	9 and 8	Y8 – P1 and P2 Y9 – P3 and P4	Y7 to Y11 back in school in normal lessons. Y13 & Y12 to arrive at 11:15am ready for P3.

If you are a parent of Y8 & Y9 and you require your child to attend the on-site provision on Wednesday 5th January, please contact Mrs Palmer on Tpalmer@tbcn.nor.olicatschools.org

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Most of our students are very familiar now with self-testing. For those who may be less familiar, appropriate support will be given by trained staff at our Lateral Flow Testing Centre – please do reassure them that they have nothing to worry about.

Whole school updates

Upon our return in January 2022, I have made the following changes: -

- Our canteen will open again fully at breaktime to all students, serving hot and cold food, as well as beverages.
- Year 7 early lunch will be removed and will now be at 1:50pm, so that learning time in lessons is maximised.
- Time slots for year groups to visit the canteen have been removed; instead, students will have the flexibility to purchase food as desired within their lunchtime slot (Y10 & 11 1.15 – 1.45pm and Y7,8 & 9 1.50pm – 2.20pm).
- Line ups have been reduced and will now take place on one occasion at the start of the school day. Students need to be punctual and arrive on site by 8.45am, ready to line up outside by 8.50am with their tutors. This will mean that both breaktime and lunchtime will be increased by 5 minutes to support moving time to lessons.
- Our one-way system has been removed to support students prompt arrival to lessons; however, a 'keep left' system will be in place when moving through the school.
- Saturday detentions have been removed, which I am sure you will welcome to support family weekend commitments. However, these have now been replaced with a Friday SLT detention from 3.20pm – 5.20pm for any student who warrants this sanction. Further information on the range of sanctions used to ensure that high standards are maintained can be found in our updated student journal.
- Head of Year 9 will be Mr Binczyk and Head of Year 10 will be Mr Asare

May I also remind you that mobile phones are not allowed to be used during the day. We understand that Parents/Carers may want their child to bring a phone to school for contact on the journey to and from school, but on arrival to school phones must be switched off and kept in students' bags until the end of the school day. If a member of staff sees or hears a mobile phone during the day, it will be confiscated.

- 1st offence per half term = pick up at the end of the day from reception
- 2nd offence per half term = must be collected from reception by a parent/ carer

Site security and confirmed timings for before school and after school supervision

As part of our ongoing responsibility to keep students safe, I must remind you of our arrangements for students to access the school site/building before and after school. Before school, students must not be on site before 8.20am as there is no direct supervision, unless they are in breakfast club or intervention. After school, students must leave site at the end of the normal school day, unless attending one of the sessions below:

- Bus club or
- An extra-curricular activity or
- An intervention session (Years 10 and 11) or
- A Further Maths or Triple Science lesson (Years 10 and 11) or
- Detention (Friday)

P6 'Excellence for all' update

From January 2022, period 6 lessons will not be compulsory unless this is a timetabled, curriculum lesson. E.g., VI Form, Further Maths or Triple Science. We are delighted to be able to offer a wide range of before/after school intervention sessions that I would welcome students to attend as appropriate (see enclosed timetable). These sessions are a 'drop-in' for those students who feel they would like additional support or should your son/daughter fail to complete some homework, miss a lesson or, closer to the summer exams, require additional exam preparation. Students who attend on an optional basis will be rewarded.

Arrangements in the event of adverse weather conditions

This term, the scattering of snow reminded me to remind parents about how we communicate with you in the event of having to close the school due to snow. If we experience dangerous and adverse weather conditions, announcements are made on the school's website and across our social media channels. If there is a fall of snow overnight leading to a morning decision, we will publish this as soon as possible and no later than 8:00am. In the event of the school having to close in the middle of the day, all parents and carers will be contacted, school transport adjusted, and the Senior Leadership Team will wait with any child who is unable to get home.

Queen's Platinum Jubilee

As some of you may be aware an extra bank holiday was announced on Friday 3rd June 2022 for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The Department for Education has amended the Education Regulations (England) to reduce the school year 2021/22 for maintained schools and academies by one day, in order to allow school to close that day or an alternative day. As we are on half term on Friday 3rd June, the regulations allow for our school to be able to choose another day to close the Academy for our students and staff, and we have decided on Friday 22nd July 2022. Therefore, the last day of the academic year will now be Thursday 21st July 2022.

As this term comes to an end, I wanted to remind you of the following key dates: -

- **External exams:** VI Form – w/c 10th January
Y11 Health and Social Care – 9th February
- **Mock exams:** VI Form – From 6th January
11 – w/c 24th January
- **Remote Parents evening:** 9th February – Year 7
23rd February – Year 11
- **End of term finish:** School is closed Monday 14th to Friday 18th February

VI Form students are asked to ensure that they are in school at least 30 minutes prior to their first exam. All timetabled lessons must be attended until each subject exam has been taken, the normal timetable will resume from Monday 24th January.

I do hope you will all be able to enjoy some restful, family time over the Christmas break and I look forward to working closely with you in the new year.

I wish you all a blessed and peaceful Christmas.

Yours faithfully



Paul McCahill
Headteacher