



31st December 2020

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

The start of term January 2021

I really hope that you have had as enjoyable a Christmas as possible. I am writing to you today following the announcements made by The Secretary of State for Education yesterday. My intention is to give you an overview before sending out more detailed information on Monday 4th January.

In essence:

- Year 11 students will not now return to school till Monday 11th January for face to face teaching
- Years 7-10 will not return till Monday 18th January for face to face teaching
- The school will, however, remain open for the children of Critical Workers and Vulnerable students (see below).

The reason for this is to:

- reduce the transmission of the Covid variant
- allow schools to plan and implement mass testing for students and staff before their return

In the meantime, all our students are expected to learn on-line by following their normal timetable from Monday 4th January. This is through Microsoft teams. Click [here](#) for further Guidance.

(Please be mindful that we had planned for teachers to be in school to deliver this using our ICT equipment. This remains our intention once we can mass test staff and students (see below). However, it might result in some minor technical issues at the start of the week as staff work remotely.)

As soon as we have created the capacity next week, we will start mass testing Y11, our staff, and those Vulnerable students and the children of Critical Workers in school. More information will follow on Monday 4th January in terms of the testing process, consent forms etc.

The intention then is that from Monday 11th January we mass test students in Years 7-10. We will also create the capacity for routine testing in school for students identified as contacts of students testing positive. More information will be sent out next week.

Children of Critical Workers and Vulnerable students (for the definition click [here](#))

The aim is that we test students before they fully enter the school community to reduce transmission. However, this option might not be up and running on Monday 4th January due to logistics and training needs. Therefore, we request that Children of Critical Workers and Vulnerable students where possible only attend from Tuesday 5th January. If this is not possible and/or you need to send you child in next week at any point please email j.stanton@bridgewaterhigh.com so that we can plan accordingly and advise you of arrangements.

I am aware that there remain many unanswered questions as a result of this decision regarding school opening. Therefore, I would ask for your ongoing patience and trust that we will keep you updated to the best of our ability next week. Educating your children in school, but safely, remains our overriding priority. Finally, I want to wish you all the best for the remainder of the holiday and let's hope for a better 2021!

Yours sincerely

Tim Long, Principal

