



BINGLEY GRAMMAR SCHOOL
Belong Grow Succeed



Monday 21st December 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I am sorry to have to write a letter to you today that will prove woefully light on detail but you will have noticed that the Department for Education has released a number of last minute directives for schools. The first of these was to ask schools to close a day earlier than planned and I would like to thank you all for making the necessary adjustments to childcare etc. with very little notice. This has now been followed by other directives regarding a staggered return to school in January along with the mass COVID testing of students. Due to the exceptionally short notice received from the Department for Education as well as the almost non-existent guidance for any operational planning that needs to be done, I plan to issue a follow up letter when we have more details about how we can comply with these latest instructions. At present, our current thinking is as follows:

January 2021 Staggered Return

- Monday 4th January 2021 Y11 and Y13 return to school for face-to-face lessons alongside children from other year groups who fall into the vulnerable or 'critical worker' categories where their parents/carers wish them to attend. These students will be in school Monday 4th January 2021 to Thursday 7th January 2021
- Pupils in Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12 will be taught remotely (more detail below) from Monday 4th January 2021 to Friday 8th January 2021
- Pupils in Y11, 13 and the children from other year groups who fall into the vulnerable or 'critical worker' categories will be taught remotely on Friday 8th January 2021 to allow the school to make final preparations for the testing programme
- All pupils are expected to return to onsite lessons from Monday 11th January onwards

I am truly sorry that a large proportion of students will miss face-to-face teaching for the first week of term, but the Government advice regarding the staggered start is intended to halt a possible rise of infections after Christmas and it is best that we are cautious.

Students with External Exams

All students (including Y10) that are scheduled to sit external exams will still do so. We will issue specific instructions as soon as we have finalised our new procedures.

Remote Learning

A separate remote learning document is attached to this email explaining how we will be delivering lessons for those students not in school via Google Classroom. Students should follow their normal timetabled day and then follow the instructions given by their classroom teacher.

Vulnerable students and the children of key workers

Those students who fall into this category will be able to attend school between Monday 4th January and Thursday 7th January 2021. They may not have face to face contact with their class teachers but may join their lesson remotely from another part of the school. If you wish to access this

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provision, please email keyworker@bingleygrammar.org for a copy of the registration form. Requests to access this provision must be received by 30th December 2020 to allow the school to plan for this as these students still need to be accommodated in year based 'bubble' groups. The definitions of vulnerable children and key workers is given on the government website.

Testing

You will have seen in the media that schools are being asked to mass test students and staff from January 2021. Specifically, this will mean that staff will be tested weekly (with results taking 30 minutes) and daily testing for students who are identified as close contacts of someone testing positive. A summary of the current information we have received is as follows:

- All schools with secondary age pupils will be able to test their pupils from the 4th January. This is not mandatory. Schools can choose not to deliver this. The Government will take no action against any school that cannot deliver this. Schools have the discretion to start mass testing at any point in the first week of term once they have made the necessary logistical arrangements. Schools are under no obligation to start mass testing on 4th January 2021. Of course, the sooner schools can put these arrangements in place, the stronger the intervention will be to curb transmission of the virus.
- Schools have the flexibility to use a 'logistical planning day' at any point during the first week of term to plan for a) the setting up of test sites; and b) implementing of mass testing. This is an additional 'INSET' day that can be used if required.
- The testing workforce will be made up of school staff and paid agency staff supplemented by volunteers for less-skilled roles (where this can be done feasibly and safely).
- Lateral Flow Device rapid tests will be provided to schools – it is intended that these will arrive in schools on 4th January.
- Individuals will undergo two Lateral Flow Device (LFDs) rapid tests spaced 3 to 5 days apart. These tests do not both have to happen in the first week.
- Tests are self-administered by pupils but overseen by a trained person advising them. Staff are not expected to administer tests on young people.
- Tests are then put in a buffer solution and produce a result in 30 minutes

For pupils and students younger than 16 years – Consent forms must be completed by the parent or legal guardian. Please complete one consent form for each child you wish to enrol.

Pupils and students over 16 can complete the consent form themselves, having discussed participation with their parent / guardian if under 18.

- We currently do not have any indication regarding how long it will take to test a large group of students.

Routine and Serial Testing (ongoing, following initial testing)

After the initial mass testing, all secondary school staff will be able to have routine testing once a week; pupils and staff will be able to do 'serial testing' if one of their contacts within school tests positive.

Pupils and staff will be able to do 'serial testing' if they are a close contact of a positive case. This will allow them to stay in education by taking a daily test in the morning for 7 school days. If at any point they test positive on the lateral flow test they will need to leave school, self-isolate and take a further PCR test. If the PCR test is positive, they will need to self-isolate for ten days from the point of the positive PCR test.

The current plan

- The mass testing of students will begin with Y11 and Y13 as they will be in school from 4th January 2021 once test kits have arrived in school.
- If test kits are present in sufficient numbers testing of staff will also occur over w/b 4th January 2021
- The INSET day for extra planning INSET day will be Friday 8th January 2021 to allow us to prepare for mass testing of the rest of the school. This day needs to be later on in the week to accommodate any delay in test kit arrival along with any developments that arise from our experiences of testing Y11 and Y13
- We will then contact parents regarding the mass testing of the remaining students on 8th January 2021 ready for the full opening of school on 11th January 2021.

Consent forms

Attached/on the reverse to this email/letter is a copy of the NHS Test and Trace consent form for COVID-19 testing. Please read the document and complete the document and return a copy to the following email address;

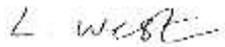
covidconsent@bingleygrammar.org

If you wish to post your consent form to us please address it to Mrs M Parker (consent form), Bingley Grammar School, Keighley Road, Bingley, West Yorkshire. BD162RS.

Please be aware that if we do not receive a consent form then your child will be unable to access testing.

The one thing that is certain is that there is a high possibility that things can change and this is an ever-changing situation. We will do our best to keep you informed of any changes and further plans as they develop. In the meantime, we hope that everyone stays safe and has a restful break.

Yours sincerely



Mr Luke Weston

Headteacher