

11 January 2021

## Parent Update

Dear Parent / Carer,

On Monday 4th January, the Prime Minister announced a National Lockdown and instructed people to stay at home to control the virus, protect the NHS and save lives. As I am sure that many of you will agree, the timing of this announcement was not a great start to 2021, but also an absolute necessity to bring the virus under control. As the Prime Minister stated, "that schools may nonetheless act as vectors for transmission, causing the virus to spread between households", we have been instructed to close until at least the February half term to help halt the spread of the virus.

### Critical Workers and Vulnerable Children

Our school remains open for children of key workers and those who are classed as 'vulnerable'. These students have already been in school last week completing their remote learning, supported by staff. I do need to remind parents and carers who are sending their children into school that, although they are still being kept in small consistent bubbles with all control measures in place to mitigate risk of potential transmission, risk cannot be eliminated as they will still be mixing with children from different households on a daily basis. The Government has made it clear that the in-school provision should only be accessed if there is **no alternative**. If the criteria change for key workers, as has been suggested recently in the news, I will let you know.

### Remote Learning

As parents and carers, please can I ask you to ensure that your child is attending all of their remote lessons on Teams, at the appropriate scheduled times and can access the work set on Class Charts. Our offer of remote learning is different from the last lockdown. There is an expectation that your child attends lessons 'live' for 5 hours per day. Staff are fully trained and are now delivering 'live' lessons for all year groups. This should help you as a parent, with supervision, as staff will be there to support your child from 09:00 – 14:30 with a 30-minute lunch.

We will be monitoring engagement of students on Teams as well as work completion via Class Charts. More details to follow.

A supportive email will be sent every Friday to parents / carers of those students who have not accessed online learning, to ensure they are aware.

Please ensure your child is safe online, for further guidance please click the link below:

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): support for parents and carers to keep children safe online - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-2019-ncov-support-for-parents-and-carers-to-keep-children-safe-online)

If you are experiencing any issues regarding ICT, or if you require support for your child with logins for RM Unify (emails), Class Charts or Doodle; please email [enquiries@cvea.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@cvea.co.uk).

### Laptops and Internet

A survey was sent out at the end of last week so we can establish an overall picture of which students don't have full access at home with internet and, more importantly, who is unable to access our 'live' lessons via TEAMS during normal school hours. As I have previously mentioned, we do have a limited supply of laptops and internet dongles available for loan during lockdown. I would appreciate a response from each parent / carer for each individual child so we can see where we can support if needed. Thanks to those who have already completed this.

### Mass Testing

Following the government initiative to offer testing for both staff and students, we are aiming for our testing centre to be up and running from Tuesday this week. We have requested consent from parents / carers to test our key worker and vulnerable students attending school. I am sure this will be available for all once the government allows other students to return to school.

### Free School Meals

We are offering food parcels to all students who qualify for free school meals. Parents have been given the choice to opt into this offer starting this week. Our aim is for food parcels to be available for collection for Year 7 and 8 on a Monday then Year 9, 10 and 11 on a Tuesday. For families with multiple students in different year groups, an arrangement can be made with regards to which day.

### SEN Students

We will be offering further support for our SEND students. Your child needs to access the Teams lessons following their normal school timetable to get any help and support that they may need from their class teacher. Any issues please contact Mrs Diamond by emailing [Diamond.L@cvea.co.uk](mailto:Diamond.L@cvea.co.uk).

### Year 11

The Prime Minister also mentioned that "it is not possible or fair for all exams to go ahead this summer as normal." This news for students and staff is disappointing and concerning, particularly after the issues centred around last year's examinations. The Secretary of State for Education will be asking Ofqual to consult rapidly on an approach for alternative arrangements that will allow students to progress fairly. At present, we do not know what these arrangements will be and will of course communicate these to you, as and when we are informed. What we do know is that assessment will take place in some format, be that a combination of coursework, shorter tests or centre assessed grades. We also know that our students will get the grades they deserve, and that teachers managed this process very successfully last year. It is crucial that all Year 11 students keep going and log in to all of their 'live' lessons with their teacher to complete the relevant work that may be needed.



## Mental Health and Wellbeing

A reminder to us all that it is very important that we exercise regularly and keep active during this lockdown. Each of us will have our own worries and concerns but it is important to note that there are people to help you, should you need it. If any families are struggling and require advice and/or support, please contact your relevant Head of Year or access the following link:

[Guidance for parents and carers on supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic)

In addition, Mr Tumelty has secured FREE PREMIUM access for pupils to an app called SWORKIT which is in the top 20 fitness app downloads online. The app contains workouts that develop all aspects of fitness which can be done from home with minimal or no equipment. Keeping students physically active is very important not only to maintain fitness levels but support good mental wellbeing. Where possible, can you encourage your child download this FREE app by visiting: <https://app.sworkit.com/redeem/>

Other numbers and sources of support where you can seek help are added as an extra attachment to this letter.

I will be keeping in contact with you regularly over the next five weeks and will impart any further information that we receive concerning examinations and remote learning updates.

Yours sincerely



Mrs J Owens  
Head of School

