

Our Ref KER/CMC

18th December 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

COVID-19 Staggered return January 2021

I am sorry to have to write to you so close to the end of term and so soon after writing my previous 'end of term' message.

You may have seen over the last 24 hours that the government have announced that the majority of secondary school students will have a staggered start to the Spring Term in January to accommodate mass testing in schools. The guidance from the DfE provides the opportunity for schools to take an extra training day on **4 January** to prepare to deliver the testing. In discussion with the Chair of the Local Governing Body we intend to take this day.

In line with this announcement I can confirm that **only Year 11 & Year 13 students will return Tuesday 5 January**, along with vulnerable children and children of critical workers. All other students will access their learning online, via Teams, in the usual way from Tuesday 5 January. All students will return to the Academy on **Monday 11 January**.

- Each day will begin with a meeting from their Achievement Leader and Year Manager at **8.30am**;
- Staff will invite the students to join a TEAMS meeting at the same time as their lesson would normally be timetabled;
- Each lesson will last 40 minutes to ensure students can maintain focus and engagement with their online learning. Apart from completing homework, there is not an expectation that students should be accessing lesson work past the end of the school day at 3pm.

Year 9 – Students in Year 9 will follow the same times of the school day as Y7 and Y11. (Y9 don't have a split lunch when following their remote learning timetable)

Any problems with accessing a specific subject TEAM or lesson please contact the teacher via email. For non-academic issues please contact Year Managers.

Any students that are entitled to a laptop to use during this remote learning period and were not in the Academy on Friday 18 December can collect one from reception on Monday 4 January.

Advice for students working from home:

- Look out for your work on TEAMS and plan your day;
- Read the posts from your teachers so you know what you need for that lesson. If you are unsure message your teacher;
- The work is not optional and is the same as being in school. We expect you to be working as you would be at school;
- Make sure you have your break and go and do something different and away from a screen in that time;

Cont/d

- We are still here to help you even though you are working from home. Contact your class teachers or your year team if you need anything;
- If you have IT problems please email enquires@consettacademy.org.uk

Timings of the school day: Year 7, 9, 11 and 6th Form

08.30 Start of the school day
08.45 Lesson 1
09.50 Break
10.05 Lesson 2
11.10 Lesson 3
12.15 Lunch
12.45 Lesson 4
13.50 Lesson 5

Timings of the school day: Year 8 and 10

08.30 Start of the school day
08.45 Lesson 1
09.50 Lesson 2
10.55 Break
11.10 Lesson 3
12.15 Lesson 4
13.20 Lunch
13.50 Lesson 5

After discussion we do feel it is important that the Year 11 mock examinations, due to take place w/c 11 January, continue as scheduled. Students have their timetables.

COVID-19 testing

In addition, the government has announced that students and staff will access to mass testing, administered by staff in school, from January. From what we can gather at the moment this means that all students and staff we be offered a test w/c 4 January thereafter staff will be tested weekly (with results taking 30 minutes) and students who are identified as close contacts of someone testing positive can be tested daily for 7 consecutive school days and remain in school if they test negative. This testing is optional, but those not consenting would be subject to the normal 10-day self-isolation period.

Clearly there is a huge amount to organise to make this whole project work and we will do our best to make testing work within the constraints we have. To make the testing programme work we will need additional staff to administer/oversee the testing process, probably for an hour or two in the morning and afternoon. If you would like to help us (and be paid) please visit our website as over the next few days we will post an advert outlining the details. Training and safety equipment will be provided.

I will write to you again early in the new term to provide you with the information you need.

In the meantime, have a good Christmas and I hope you manage to enjoy some festive cheer.

Yours sincerely



Kevin Reynolds (Mr)
Executive Principal

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Part of New College Durham Academies Trust
Executive Principal: Mr K Reynolds, MA