



## Horsforth School

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Headteacher: Dr P C Bell

Our Ref: PCB/TRH

18<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope you and your family are safe, well and have a wonderful Christmas.

I was hoping my final communication of the term would be the newsletter which celebrates the positives of the term but there have been some announcements over the last two days that will have left you with many questions and I want to be able to give you the answers that I am able to.

### **Staggered return in January**

The Government has announced (in the link below) that:

*“Students in exam year groups, vulnerable children and children of critical workers will all attend school or college in person from the start of term, as will all students in primary, special and alternative provision schools and colleges. Vocational exams scheduled for the week of 4 January will go ahead as planned. Secondary schools and colleges will operate a staggered return, offering all non-exam year groups full-time remote education, as close as possible to that which students would get in class, during the first week of term, with face-to-face education for all starting on 11 January.”*

The official information I have been given is here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/staggered-rollout-of-coronavirus-testing-for-secondary-schools-and-colleges>

**As a result only Years 11 and 13 will be expected back on January 4<sup>th</sup> and all other Year groups will learn remotely which will be as close as possible to that which students would get in class.**

Year 11 and 13 students will arrive at their usual times through their usual entrances.

Students whose parents are Key Workers and Vulnerable students will be able to attend and we will supervise them completing their online learning. These students **will not receive anything different in terms of learning than students at home** but they will be supervised and looked after on site.

We do have to accommodate our vulnerable students within this provision and space is limited. We therefore ask that parents who work in these sectors that are able to keep their child at home safely to complete the remote learning please do so.

If you are a parent of a **vulnerable** child we will contact you.

If you are a parent who is a Key Worker and intend for your child(ren) to attend on January 4<sup>th</sup> you must fill in this form:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1DBUfj8WUmYrladya3JESsnhx4aXFFs\\_d747bZeZ-FZw/edit](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1DBUfj8WUmYrladya3JESsnhx4aXFFs_d747bZeZ-FZw/edit)

**Students who register will be expected to be in every day that week.**

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If you are unsure whether you are a Key Worker or your child may be classed as Vulnerable please use this information: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

Students in Key Worker and Vulnerable provision will be 'bubbled' together (all Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12) as we did in June due to the fact we will not be able to staff separate provisions or provide IT facilities for each Year group. Strict social distancing and face coverings will continue and year groups will be kept together within the bubble.

The only entrance/exit to this provision will be the **back gate** near to St Margret's Church.

Staff will open the gate at 8.00am and this will have to close at 8.15am. Therefore please ensure your child is on time. Students will leave the site at 2.30pm.

Further information will be sent to those families who register.

I can only apologise at the notice I am giving you for this, following the Government's announcement yesterday and hope that it does not cause you any inconvenience.

### **Remote Learning for Students in Years 7-10 and Year 12 from 4th - 8th January 2021**

Students in Years 7-10 and Year 12 are expected to follow their normal timetable and their teacher will deliver a live, interactive input during the timetabled lesson time. This would be for a minimum of 30 minutes using Google Meet. This might involve, for example, a focused Q&A session, an explanation of new content or task in more detail, engaging students with a low stake quiz or giving feedback on work previously completed. Students will then use the rest of the time to get on with the tasks set. Students will be expected to 'attend' each lesson remotely and keep up with the work set. Attendance to lessons will be monitored. The only exception is if the student is unwell, in which case parents will be expected to report the illness and absence to school in the usual way. Form time will also be delivered remotely and all students are expected to attend.

For all live lessons, please ensure:

- Your child is in an appropriate and neutral space such as a dining table, desk, sofa, kitchen table. Your child should not be in bed, or in a bedroom.
- That there is nothing inappropriate or offensive in the background.
- Remind your child to not share personal information whilst on line.
- Try to ensure the space is quiet and that other children are not seen in the background.
- Your child should be appropriately dressed and ready to learn, with full equipment at hand.
- Your child must follow the same rules and etiquette as we would expect in a classroom.
- Ground rules may be given at the start of each lesson and these must be followed. Students may ask staff appropriate questions when prompted.
- Students who behave poorly during a live lesson will be subject to the same sanctions in line with school policy on their return.
- Your child does not allow anyone into the Google Meet who doesn't have a Horsforth School account and they do not share the Google Meet link with anyone else.

### **Testing**

The Government would like us to put lateral flow testing capacity on site in order to test teachers once per week for COVID and for the close contacts of anyone who has tested positive. **No student would ever be tested without active permission from parents or carers** but a negative result is required for close contacts to come into school.

This is to help to deliver the national priority to keep education open for all and help fight the spread of the virus, while keeping schools and colleges safe.

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This should tackle the one in three who have the virus but do not have symptoms, so could be spreading the disease unknowingly, and minimise disruption during the spring term by helping identify positive cases when pupils return to face-to-face education following the Christmas break.

It is worth mentioning that of the four positive cases in school since we returned after ½ term, two have been asymptomatic.

The idea is that any student or staff member who has been a close contact of a positive COVID case would be tested daily (for up to 7 days) and if the lateral flow test was negative they would be allowed in school.

Anyone showing symptoms would of course **not** be allowed on site or to be tested in this way and they must get a test through the normal routes. We would not test anyone who showed symptoms.

Anyone who tested positive for COVID on these tests would have to go home, get a PCR test through normal routes and isolate.

The lateral flow tests are the same ones that the NHS workers take twice weekly and whilst they are less sensitive than the normal PCR tests they are reliable.

I will be completely frank and state that I do not know when we will be able to have this running from. We will need a number of extra staff to make this work as everyone currently in school is at capacity and there will be some significant logistical challenges for us to overcome.

The Government has suggested we can ask for volunteers who would be able to support us in running this so if you would be able to help in any way we would appreciate if you could contact us on [info@horsforthschool.org](mailto:info@horsforthschool.org) leaving your availability and contact details and we will get back to you in the New Year. The previous pilot testing in schools has been performed by the Army so finding the right people to make this work will be key for us.

### **Contact tracing over the Christmas break**

Just a reminder that if you are unlucky enough to receive a positive test after school breaks up could you please email the school at [info@horsforthschool.org](mailto:info@horsforthschool.org) with the following information:

1. The date symptoms first appeared
2. The date the test results were received
3. Any close contacts at social times:
  - a. a person who has had face-to-face contact (within one metre, no mask), with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19
  - b. a person who has been within 2 metres of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 for more than 15 minutes

Students are infectious 48 hours prior to symptoms appearing.

If a student **develops symptoms from Monday the 21st and tests positive you do not need to inform the school** (as they will not have been infectious whilst in school) just follow the NHS test and trace process.

Thank you for your continued support, positive messages and understanding. I know this is a tremendously difficult time for some families so I hope your Christmas is restful and festive.

I am sorry again to give you this amount of information (not the best Christmas gift) with so little notice. As soon as I have our plans for lateral flow testing I will update you.

Merry Christmas

Dr P Bell  
Headteacher

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