

2nd January 2021
19:00

Dear Families,

Re: Remote learning on Teams for all years from 5th January 2021 as it currently stands

Happy New Year!

We are only two days into the new year and it certainly seems like the new developments, announcements and changes will not be stopping any time soon in education! I felt that it would be a good time to write to you just to keep you abreast of what our plans are to date and confirmation on remote learning for all year groups.

Remote learning for all year groups

The Department for Education confirmed that schools are only required to provide 'some remote learning' for years 7 to 10 and that remote learning for year 11 should be 'prioritised'. This is to aid schools with the huge mass testing programme that the government has now made compulsory for schools to set up (more information below).

Although remote learning is not mandatory for years 7 to 10 according to the government guidelines, as it currently stands, we do not see why we cannot continue to provide teaching for those year groups as it will mainly be me and support staff who will be organising the roll out of mass testing. **As a result, we have made the decision that all year groups will be taught their full timetable from 5th January 2021.** This will only change if there are any further developments between now and Tuesday which would mean teachers are required to do other duties and not be able to teach.

I was hoping that I would not have to put a caveat as I have done above on remote learning for all years as I know it can be unsettling and frustrating, but unfortunately, I will not be receiving the information I need until Monday 4th January and Tuesday 5th January 2021. The various meetings and webinars on these dates may unfortunately still change this decision if I am required to use teaching staff with the setup of the mass testing for example. I can only be as open and honest with you as I can on the information available to me at this stage and I hope that you will understand – as ever, I thank you for your patience during this turbulent time.

Remote learning will definitely go ahead with year 11s and will certainly be prioritised at Burton Borough School.

We have some new members of teaching staff joining us on the 4th January who will be in school so that they can be trained on how to use Teams at Burton Borough School during our professional development day. We have rearranged the day so that students do not miss out on teaching from the 5th January and so that teachers can still receive the mandatory training that was planned. I would like to publicly thank all members of staff who have been flexible so that this could happen at such short notice.

Mass COVID Testing at schools with Lateral Flow Tests

As mentioned previously, I will be receiving some training and guidance on the mass rollout of the COVID-19 lateral flow tests on Monday as well as participating in meetings at a local level with the Director of Education and Skills. Schools are now required to offer the lateral flow tests (up until a few days ago it was optional) so preparations are underway, and we are ready to receive our stock on Monday morning. **Although schools are now required to offer the lateral flow tests, parents/carers must give their consent if they want their child tested. These tests are not compulsory.**



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There have been several families who have queried the accuracy of these tests and whether they are the best solution for schools. I will certainly be asking these questions along with a list of other questions I have at the various webinars and meetings on Monday. I want to be able to give families the full information available on the tests so that you can decide if it is right for your child. Rest assured, I will always make decisions for the school that I deem to be in the best interests of our students, staff and community with the information available to me.

Once I have had the opportunity to put the information I receive on Monday in a user-friendly format for families, I will send it out along with a survey so that families can indicate whether they would like their child to receive the test. The information will also inform families of who will be administering the tests and what training they have had if your child is not able to carry out the testing themselves.

With the huge developments that are happening by the hour in education at the moment, it is likely that I will be writing to you again in the next couple days.

For now, I wish you all hope, health and positivity for 2021. Please let your children know that we are missing them very much and we are hoping to see them very soon.

With all good wishes and stay safe,



Krissi Carter
Principal



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