



# BENTON PARK SCHOOL

*'Creating a climate for great learning, success and opportunity'*

Dear Parent/Carers,

31<sup>st</sup> December 2020

I hope you have all enjoyed a restful and relaxing Christmas break.

Following the Government's most recent announcement in relation to the re-opening of schools in January 2021, please find below an update outlining plans for our students' return to school.

As previously detailed, the current guidance states that secondary schools in England should operate a staggered return to school in January, however, the latest guidance outlines that this return will be delayed by a further week than previously expected, meaning that all year groups will be learning remotely for the first week in January, and only Years 11 and 13 will return to school on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January. For students in Years 7-10 and in Year 12, they will continue their learning remotely, and will return to school on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January.

The Government has outlined that this national delayed return is due to the recent infection rate data, the rapid increase in positive cases, and the additional concerns nationally about the new variant of the virus. There is an additional expectation on schools that this time is used to ensure education continues remotely while schools plan the capacity needed to safely carry out in-school rapid, lateral flow tests for students and staff choosing to access these. The safety of our students and staff remains of paramount importance and we recognise the importance of balancing this with the educational and emotional needs of our students.

Remote learning for students will follow the timings for the school day as follows:

8.25am – 8.45am	Form Time
8.45am – 9.45am	Periods 1 & 2
10.45am -11.00am	Break time
11.00am – 1.00pm	Periods 3 & 4
1.00pm – 1.30pm	Lunchtime
1.30pm – 2.30pm	Period 5

Content delivery will include live online learning sessions, which students should attend wherever possible. There will be points during the live lessons where teachers are delivering content to students, and points during which they will be working independently, with the staff available online should they have any questions or concerns. The delivery of live learning will begin from Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January, as there will be an additional staff Training Day on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January. If your child is unable to access remote learning because they themselves are unwell, please let us know so we can record this appropriately. We will be reminding students of our expectations for remote learning. Please ensure they are reminded to adhere to these to ensure remote lessons remain a safe and productive learning environment for all students.

We will provide food vouchers for students eligible for Free School Meals who are working from home from Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January.

In line with Government guidance, we will be providing the opportunity for a number of students to attend school from Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January to access remote learning onsite. We will contact parents/carers of students identified by school as eligible for one of these places directly via Edu-link. These will include students who have an EHCP or are considered to be vulnerable. We understand that, given the current infection rates, some parents/carers may prefer for their child/children to remain at home and access the learning on-line during this period.

**Headteacher: Miss D Martin**

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There will also be the opportunity for children of key workers who are unable to remain at home and access remote learning to be supervised in school. These students will be supervised by school staff and will access the same work set through Microsoft Teams as their peers working remotely from home. If your child needs a place in school because parents/carers are keyworkers, and they need to be supervised in school, please complete the [form for Keyworkers](#) to request a place for your child by 1.00pm on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2021.

Students attending school will need to wear full school uniform and bring their equipment for the school day; however, they do not need to bring PE kit during this week. We will endeavour to keep students in Year Group bubbles where possible. Where students are expected to be in school and are unable to attend due to illness or periods of self-isolation, parents/carers should notify attendance in the usual way.

Year 12 students who are entered for the external exams in Health and Social Care on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January and Sport on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> January will continue to prepare for these exams remotely, although additional support will be made available to them to support them in their preparations.

We are still awaiting detailed guidance about the Government's expectations for Covid Testing in schools using rapid, lateral flow tests. We are, however, able to reassure parents of the following information:

- Testing will be voluntary and only carried out where we have appropriate consent from parents/carers, staff and students. Students under the age of 16 will require parental consent. Students over the age of 16 will be able to provide their own consent, therefore we recommend discussing this with your child in advance.
- Where parents/carers, staff and students do not consent to testing, we will continue to follow Government guidance regarding track and trace and periods of self-isolation.
- If a student does take up the option of testing and a lateral flow test indicates a positive result, parents/carers would need to collect their child and arrange for a PCR test to confirm the result and let school know the outcome of this test.
- It is critical that testing is safe for students and staff. Where it is not possible to carry out testing in line with the guidance and training, we may decline to continue with the test, even where consent has been provided by parents/carers. In this instance, we would contact parents/carers to discuss any concerns individually.

We hope to be able to share more information regarding the offer of testing in the coming week.

Once again, I would like to thank you for your support, understanding and patience at what continues to be very challenging and unprecedented times.

Yours sincerely

Delia Martin  
Headteacher

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