



# BENTON PARK SCHOOL

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

Dear Parent/Carers

We are writing to provide you with an update following yesterday's announcement from the Government in relation to the re-opening of schools in January 2021.

The current guidance states that secondary schools in England should operate a staggered return to school in January and schools should consider providing rapid, lateral flow tests to students and staff, where consent is provided. Whilst the decisions made and the timing of the announcements are outside of our control, we fully appreciate that such limited notice may make planning childcare arrangements, especially for younger students, particularly difficult. We would like to apologise for the very late notification of the changes to the start of the spring term and the inconvenience caused.

In light of the guidance I am writing to confirm the following arrangements:

There will be an additional training day scheduled for Monday 4th January to allow the school to plan the logistics, training and staffing which need to be considered before any testing could commence. **Therefore no students should attend school on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January.**

For the rest of the week, from Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January to Friday 8<sup>th</sup> inclusive, only Year 11 and Year 13 who will all sit their exams this academic year will return to school for face-to-face teaching. Break and lunch catering facilities will be available from the 5<sup>th</sup> January for these year groups and should be pre-ordered as usual. The normal school bus service will operate at the start and end of the school day.

Students in Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12 will access full-time remote education from Tuesday 5th January 2021 and will work from home for the rest of this week. 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. We will provide food vouchers for students eligible for Free School Meals who are working from home from Tuesday 5th January. Students in Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12 will return to school on Monday 11th January 2021 for face-to-face teaching on site.

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 be able to come to school to sit the exam as scheduled.

In addition we will be providing the opportunity for a number of groups 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 a place directly via Edu-link. These will include students who have an EHCP, are considered vulnerable or where students need to attend school so parents or carers who are keyworkers can attend work. 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.

**Headteacher: Miss D Martin**

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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 Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> December 2020.

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 groups bubbles where possible. Where students are expected to be in school and are unable to attend due to illness, parents/carers should notify attendance in the usual way.

Unfortunately, we are currently unable to provide details on what the Covid testing will look like from January for staff and students. Guidance is due to be provided shortly to school leaders on how to set up and staff the testing sites, but like many schools we have concerns about how we are expected to have the capacity and expertise to carry out mass testing in school.

Whilst we understand and welcome the principles behind mass testing in schools, we would need to consider a number of logistical challenges before confirming we could undertake this safely and appropriately. We would therefore ask you to bear with us while we await more information and guidance and we hope to be able to share more information after the holidays when it is available.

Once again, I would like to wish you a Merry Christmas and a healthy and happy New Year and 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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