



NORLINGTON SCHOOL and 6TH FORM

A SPECIALIST MATHEMATICS AND COMPUTING SCHOOL

Wisdom is Strength

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope you and yours remain well at this time. Since the end of term there have been many changes and updates to how schools should be responding to the COVID pandemic. This letter outlines the key information you will need. Further more focused communication will follow.

The good news is there is light at the end of the tunnel with the completion of successful vaccine trials and the quick implementation of a vaccination programme across the country, focusing on those most at risk.

The bad news is the development of a more contagious strain of the COVID virus that has been central to the increased COVID R value and number of cases experienced. Waltham Forest and surrounding areas are now in Tier 4 with strict measures in place.

As a school we not only recognise the anxiety felt within our community, but feel it ourselves. We are therefore taking all required actions to ensure Norlington School remains a safe environment for all students and staff.

On the official last day of term, Friday 18th December, the government provided guidance on expectations for opening in January and new rapid Lateral Flow COVID tests to be completed in schools. Further updates have been provided by the government and the local authority since then.

This Letter is setting out the current plan for students to return to school in January based upon the latest guidance provided to the school. **It may well change and we ask all parents/carers to remain vigilant for emails/communication and check the school website for updates.**

Return to School and online learning

The current guidance is for only Year 11/13 students to return to school on Monday 11th January. The guidance states that all other students will return by Monday 18th January. This date may well change. We are, however, working towards this date.

All students in **Year 7 to 10 and 12** will be able to access work through their MICROSOFT TEAMS accounts or Google Classroom (Maths). A regular series of online lessons will be delivered alongside online learning platforms such as Hegarty Maths and EzyEducation. It is important that students' login and attend online lessons. Details, guidance and instructions will follow shortly with an expectation that a basic programme will start from Wednesday 5th January. A fuller programme will commence from Monday 11th January.

As part of the learning package there may be an onsite event for **Year 10** during the week of Monday 11th January. We will notify parents of this in due course of details.

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In an effort to maintain social distancing and reduce the risk of the spread of COVID amongst students and staff we will be adapting the planned **Year 11** Mock exams to start Monday 11th January. The Mocks are an important part of the learning journey for students and their removal will be detrimental to their preparation for the June final exams. While the exams will take place in the new larger well ventilated gym, with students far more spread out than in the old gym, we will be asking students to follow updated hygiene protocols and **wear face masks** during their exams. Further details for Year 11 parents/carers and students will be provided next week setting out expectations and plans as well as the updated timetable. Online learning, including live lessons, will start on Tuesday 5th January and will focus on preparing students for these mock exams.

Year 13 students will start remote learning from Tuesday 5th January and be expected to attend school for face to face lessons from Monday 11th January. There will be extra COVID related actions taken to maintain safety and wellbeing including moving to larger ventilated rooms and attendance only being required for timetabled lessons.

More details on school return will follow.

Vulnerable and Keyworker Students

An onsite programme for all vulnerable students and children of keyworker will be implemented from Tuesday 5th January. Parents wishing to access this provision will need to contact the school office by 3 pm on Monday 4th January to book a place.

Lateral Flow Testing (LFT)

The DfE have issued guidance outlining the rollout of testing in Secondary Schools and other schools with Secondary age pupils from the start of term. This is not an immediate requirement and Waltham Forest Local Authority have stated they are intending to pilot this in a couple of schools in the first week of term (4th January). This strategy has been adopted by several local authorities and will allow the most effective operational implementation possible. As part of this pilot there will be an exploration of what support the Council and volunteers can provide to schools. The Lateral Flow Testing by schools will represent a key contribution to the wider community testing that the Council is encouraging. All Secondary Schools have been informed by the DfE that LFT's are being delivered to schools during the week beginning Monday 4th January.

Planning at Norlington is well underway and we are confident we will be able to deliver these tests as directed. This will include testing year 11 and 13 on Monday 11th January. As soon as we have further information we will update parents/carers.

Updated guidance for Clinically Extremely Vulnerable

It has been confirmed that with effect from 21 December 2020, all staff and students who are classified as **Clinically Extremely Vulnerable** should not go to the workplace if they live or work in Tier 4 areas. As Waltham Forest is in Tier 4 this applies to all schools from the start of the Spring term and until this guidance is superseded.

Thank you for your continuing support during these challenging times. I hope that over the next few weeks we see further progress with the nationwide vaccination programme and a return to a more normal life.

I would like to wish all members of our community a happy holiday and New Year.

Yours sincerely

Mr J Hernandez
Principal
Norlington School and 6th Form