



Monday 4th January, 2020.

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I just wanted to send an update confirming plans for the week ahead. I must stress that the plans outlined below are as they stand at the moment. I'm sure parents will be aware that the situation appears to be developing at a pace and so we may need to change course depending on any action announced by the government in the coming days.

Staggered return of pupils and remote learning

All pupils with the exception of both vulnerable pupils and the children of key workers who intend to attend school should remain at home this week. We will be providing remote learning for all pupils across all year groups from tomorrow, Tuesday the 5th of January.

Lessons will be conducted through Teams, which pupils are all aware of and for which they have received training twice already this year, building on their use across the lockdown period that ran from March. Pupils have a subject team for each of their subject classes and we expect them, from tomorrow, to follow their usual school timetable accessing Teams to interact with their staff and complete work set. We will be asking pupils to identify themselves to the member of staff at the start of the lesson and at the end of the lesson to ensure attendance.

It's important to stress that presence in the lesson doesn't necessarily represent engagement and so staff will be setting mini online assessments at the end of the week to assess the understanding of pupils in relation to the content delivered across the week. Where staff identify that pupils haven't been present in class regularly or there is concern that they've failed to engage with work and activities set, we'll contact parents to discuss our concerns.

There will, of course, be occasions where pupils are not able to engage in home learning, for example they might be unwell. In this case we'd ask parents contact the school following the usual procedures to report illness so that we know not to expect pupils in virtual lessons.

We have issued several laptops to eligible pupils and to our knowledge we've ensured that pupils now have access to equipment that allows them to access Teams. Where there are concerns relating to access to Teams for any reason we have set up a dedicated email address for parents to direct queries remotelearning@penkethhigh.org.



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THE CHALLENGE ACADEMY TRUST C/O PRIESTLEY COLLEGE, LOUSHERS LN, WARRINGTON WA4 6RD. COMPANY NUMBER 10689247

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Principal: Mr J Carlin BA(Hons) NPQH



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Mass Testing

As I'm sure parents are aware, the government have asked schools to set up mass testing centres in school. This affords pupils and staff the opportunity to undertake two 'lateral flow tests' as they return to school. It is our intention to roll out this testing programme from the week commencing Wednesday 5th of January. In the first instance we will prioritise testing in relation to the phased and staggered return dates for pupils. So vulnerable pupils and the children of key workers present in school this week will be offered the opportunity to be tested first, upon their return to school. We will also be offering tests to Year 11 pupils later this week by appointment ahead of their return from the 11th of January. Finally, pupils across Year 7 – 10 will be offered tests across the week commencing 11th of January before their return on the 18th of January.

Following the initial testing programme for all, testing will then focus on the close contacts of anyone who tests positive in school, giving pupils who've been in close contact the option of remaining in school but testing each day for 7 days rather than self-isolating. Where this is the case we'll contact parents directly to seek consent and to arrange.

We've issued a letter to all parents of vulnerable pupils, those who are key workers and whose children will be attending school and parents of Year 11 pupils with a link to the testing registration form, the consent form and the privacy notice. Thank you to those parents who have completed this already, should you wish for your child to participate in the testing programme we would need this form completing by the end of Tuesday 5th of January.

Further information regarding testing will be issued to the parents of Year 7 – 10 pupils towards the end of this week ahead of their testing window from the 11th of January.

Keyworker and vulnerable pupil provision

As you know school was due to return on Tuesday the 5th of January, from this date we will be offering an onsite provision for all pupils in Year 7 – 11 who are either classed as vulnerable or who are the children of critical key workers. We have already contacted the parents and guardians of all vulnerable children prior to us closing for Christmas and the parents and guardians of vulnerable pupils in Year 11 across the day today.

For those children of key workers we asked parents to contact keyworkers@penkethhigh.org to identify where their child would be returning to school. Thank you to those who have contacted us, we sent an email to all parents who have requested a place at school.

Pupils in school this week will access classrooms with pupils from their own year group in order to maintain the integrity of our "bubbles" ahead of the wider return of pupils from the 11th and 18th of January. The school day will operate as normal, so pupils should arrive at their usual staggered start time assigned for their year group.

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The school canteen will be open as normal for pupils to purchase food and I have confirmed this morning that school buses will be running as normal. So pupils in attendance this week simply need to follow their normal routine; though they will undertake all of their lessons in one room and we will inform them of this on their arrival on Tuesday.

Finally, having looked at the weather forecast for this week, it appears that it will remain cold. Guidance for safe operation dictates that we need to ventilate areas including classrooms so, with this in mind, we will be removing the need for pupils to wear their uniform. They can wear their own clothes in order that they can wrap up warm should they feel the need to.

Free School Meals

We can now confirm that we will be in a position to provide vouchers for all pupils eligible for free school meals who are not present in school. We will be providing information around how these are to be issued.

We are currently in an extremely fluid situation and over the course of the next few weeks there might be some further adaptations to plans. I recognise that the timing of the latest government announcement has been difficult for families, but we'll do whatever we can to adapt quickly and to keep you updated regularly. I'd like to thank you for your continued support at what is a challenging situation for us all.

The safe operation of our school to ensure the wellbeing of our pupils, staff and wider community remains a key priority, as does providing our young people with access to learning to support their wider development and future successes.

Yours sincerely,

Mr J Carlin.

Principal.



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