

All Hallows Catholic College

A Voluntary Academy | National Teaching School

Aspire not to have more but to be more

Brooklands Avenue, Macclesfield, Cheshire SK11 8LB | Telephone: 01625 426138 | Fax: 01625 468126 | admin@allhallows.org.uk | www.allhallows.org.uk

Principal - Mr T Beesley

1st January 2021

Dear Parent or Carer,

I hope you are well and that you have had a happy and peaceful Christmas. May I take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy new year, and I am sorry about writing to you on New Year's Day, but following recent announcements from the Government I believe it is important that I share with you the latest arrangements for the start of term and the DfE's proposals about mass testing in schools and colleges.

START OF TERM - JANUARY 2021

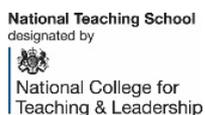
Along with Wednesday's news about Cheshire East and neighbouring authorities moving into Tier 4, the Education Secretary also announced changes to the staggered start to term. In summary, the current arrangements from Tuesday 5th January are:

Week Commencing	Vulnerable Students & Children of Critical Workers	Exam Year Groups (Years 11 & 13)	All Other Year Groups (Years 7 ,8 ,9 ,10 &12*)
Tuesday 5 th January	Return to College	Remote Learning	Remote Learning
Monday 11 th January	Continue at College	Return to College	Remote Learning
Monday 18 th January	Continue at College	Continue at College	Return to College

***Vocational exams are to go ahead as planned, so please refer to the exam timetable on the College website, [here](#). The class of Year 12 students who have an IT exam on Wednesday 13th & Thursday 14th January, are still expected to attend College on Wednesday 6th & Thursday 7th January, as planned.**

As communicated in my previous letter of 18th December, the parents & carers of identified vulnerable students from Years 7, 8, 9, 10 & 12 have been contacted separately, and any students in Years 11 & 13 who we believe are 'vulnerable', as defined in the DfE guidance below, will be contacted by next Tuesday. Likewise, if either parent or carer is a critical worker, as defined in the DfE guidance below, and you want your child in Year 11 to attend College in the first week of term, then you should contact Mrs Metheringham at principalpa@allhallows.org.uk, with your child's name and critical worker category. The parents and carers of children of critical workers in Years 7-10, who require a place in College from the start of term, should have already been in touch with us, and we look forward to welcoming those students back into College next Tuesday, at the normal time.

For the majority of students, who are working from home, they should follow their normal College timetable for remote learning. Links for Microsoft Teams lessons will be emailed to students' College email addresses, and posted on Show My Homework. If a lesson is unable to be live-streamed, for whatever



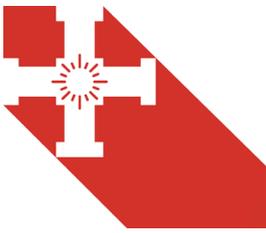
Honourable Purpose

Respect

Compassion

Co-operation

Stewardship



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reason, alternative work will be posted on Show My Homework. Attendance to online lessons, and completion of work, is compulsory, and registers will be taken. If any families are having difficulty accessing work, please contact your child's Form Tutor in the first instance. Please refer to the COVID Addendum in the College Rewards & Behaviour Policy for remote learning rules & expectations:

<https://www.allhallows.org.uk/rewards-and-behaviour-policy>.

Further information about the start of term, including definitions for 'vulnerable' and 'critical workers' can be found on the DfE's website, [here](#).

COVID-19 TESTING

As you may be aware, the government has also announced that they want voluntary, rapid testing to be delivered in all secondary schools, so that:

- all staff will be tested each week
- all students will be tested twice, within five days, from the start of term
- going forward, all close contacts of positive cases can be tested each day for seven days and so avoiding the need for self-isolation unless they test positive

Despite the huge logistical issues that still need to be resolved, we are fully supportive of this idea in principle and it has the potential to have a significant, beneficial impact on staff, students and their families, greatly reducing the number of days anyone would miss College due to having to self-isolate. However, we remain frustrated by the limited amount of information we have received so far, leaving us with many practical questions which will need to be answered before we can make the necessary arrangements to administer these tests. The government believes that these obstacles can be overcome with tests starting to be rolled out to those that want them in the first weeks of the new term. In a large school this process is particularly problematic, however. In order to test everyone in College once over a three-day period, it has been suggested that we would require 7 testing bays that would need to be staffed by 14 people, working six hours per day, according to the government's planning tool. Given that so many questions remain unanswered - we haven't seen the nature of the training, we haven't known when PPE and testing kits would be in College or the requirements for DBS clearance - having to plan for this over a period when College is closed has been difficult. I would ask, however, that you familiarise yourself with the following information on the [gov.uk website](#):

- A [template letter](#) that explains testing to parents, students and staff, and asks parents, students and staff to register
- A [leaflet](#) that explains testing to students, parents and staff.
- A [consent form template](#) for schools and colleges to get consent from:
 - Parents, if their child is under 16
 - Students, if they are over 16 - students should discuss their participation with a parent or carer first
 - Staff members



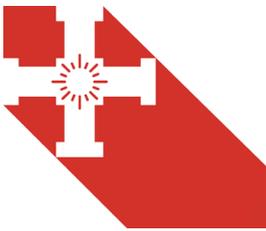
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Rather than having everyone print and return a paper copy, however, we are looking to set up an electronic consent form, but you will also be able to print a copy of the template form and return it on the day of testing via your child, or a paper copy will be available on the day if you are bringing your child in for the test (only for those students who may be identified as needing parental support, if further guidance recommends this). Further details about all of this will follow.

In light of the increased workforce requirements, we will be seeking volunteers to support us with this process. If you are you able to volunteer to help out for a morning or afternoon testing session, on any particular day of the week, please complete this [Volunteering Form](#):

I am sorry that I am unable to provide any more detail at this time and for the short notice, but I hope you understand that this is a rapidly changing situation, which I am sure will gather pace over the coming weeks. I will write to you again next week once more information is made available to us.

As always, if you do any questions about this or any other matter, please feel free to email my PA, Mrs Metheringham, at principalpa@allhallows.org.uk

I wish you all a very happy New Year.

God Bless

Tim Beesley



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