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Deputy Head Pastoral
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31st December 2020

Dear Parent,

As many of you will be aware the UK government made another announcement with regards to the reopening of schools in the Lent term. Once again, I am writing to you today to explain how this will affect your child and when they are able to return to school.

We will continue to follow the government guidance on how to phase the start of term. This means the following:

Phased start to term

When I last wrote to you with regards to the start of the Lent term, I told that you that some of you will need to stay at home longer and will no longer have the option of coming in for the first week of term. This will now apply to year 11 and year 13 as well. There are no changes for KS2 pupils, they are to attend in the usual way. Full boarders who have already made travel arrangements and / or quarantine arrangements with us may proceed as normal and return to the College as planned.

During the first week of term most pupils in years 7-13 should stay at home. We will be providing remote education for all pupils from years 7-13. As lessons will be provided online, those that are physically in school will also need to take part in lessons in this manner so they can join their class online. They will need to bring their own headphones with them into school. As we know from previous lockdowns our provision of remote education works well.

From Saturday 2nd January 2021 College will be open for:

- Boarders having to self-isolate on their return, who have already informed us of their travel plans.

From Sunday 3rd January, the following pupils can come in to school:

- Boarders not required to self-isolate who are vulnerable children and children of critical workers. However, you may still choose to stay at home and work on-line for up to the first two weeks of the new term. Please be aware, all lessons will be on line, even if you are in school.



On Monday 4th January, the following pupils can come in to school:

- Day Pupils who are vulnerable children and children of critical workers. However, you may still choose to stay at home and work on-line for up to the first two weeks of the new term. Lessons will be on line, even if you are in school. To assist our planning, it would be helpful if you would email your child's tutor before Monday to explain that you are a key worker or your child has a vulnerability that necessitates them working in school rather than at home.
- All pupils in years 3 to 6. We do expect KS2 pupils to attend as normal, however if there are specific family reasons why a pupil is to stay at home please email your child's tutor to explain.

School Transport

- Buses will run as normal on the 4th January, although some changes may be implemented for the rest of the week, depending on usage.

Uniform

- Those pupils in school should be in uniform as normal.

If you are unsure about whether or not your child falls into one of these categories, please contact us on Reception@ellesmere.com for confirmation.

From Sunday 10th January, Year 11 and Year 13 can come into school, but again may choose to remain at home for this week

From Sunday 18th January all pupils should be back in school, subject to any further government changes.

Mass testing programme

One of the reasons the government has given for the delay in returning to school is due to the mass testing of pupils (years 7-13) and staff in schools, as a way of reducing the spread of the virus and enabling fewer pupils and staff to have to self-isolate. You can read more about how the government expects this programme to work [here](#).

Given that the kits will not arrive in schools until next week, there will be no testing in the first few days. Participation remains voluntary and active consent will be required. We will write to you again next week with the appropriate form.

Regardless of the testing regime, as well as the implementation of vaccinations over the coming months, there is still the ongoing risk of spreading Covid-19 in schools. As such, we will continue to implement the safety measures we have been using in the Michaelmas term.



Ellesmere

A 7 – 18 Coeducational School

Please accept our apologies for having to send this letter only days away from the start of next term. We are having to respond to the latest government guidance.

Thank you for your patience, and all best wishes for a safe and enjoyable New Year.

Kind Regards,

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