

Our Ref: PRC/JYD

17 December 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope this letter finds you well. This will be the last time I fill your inbox in 2021. That said, we have been here before and the national situation remains uncertain and unclear. I will keep you updated during the holidays if anything changes and rest assured we are reviewing our contingency measures in case a quick response is required. In summary, this is what I know today.

### **Covid Update**

***Boosters-*** As we approach the winter holidays, take up of the booster jab is critical to protect everyone from serious illness and provide the best defence possible. 12-15 year olds who have not been vaccinated can book an appointment out of school on the National Booking System, and from 20<sup>th</sup> December those eligible for second doses will be also be able to book.

***Testing-*** All education staff and students of secondary age and above should continue to test, and importantly report those test results, twice-weekly.

***Daily testing for contacts of COVID-19-*** from 14th December, a new national approach to daily testing for contacts of COVID-19 has been introduced. All adults who are fully vaccinated and children aged 5 to 18 years and 6 months, identified as a contact of someone with COVID-19 – whether Omicron or not – should take an LFD test every day for 7 days instead of self-isolating.

**Once notified by Test and Trace (NOT the school) as a close contact**, all students are strongly recommended to take a LFD each day for 7 days and report the results through the [online reporting system](#) and to their setting. If they test negative, they can continue to attend their education setting. Outside of the education setting, they should continue to follow [national guidance](#). This approach should also be adopted over the Christmas holiday and on return in January.

### **January examinations**

There are external exams for vocational and technical qualifications timetabled for January. Students who are due to sit these exams will be prepared and it is right that they should be given every opportunity to demonstrate what they have learnt. **Exams and formal assessments will go ahead.** Consequently, it is essential that students continue to prepare for these assessments.

**Preit Chahal** Principal

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## **Start of term reminders**

January 2022 start of term arrangements were in my last update but in case you missed them here is the link:

[https://www.gosforthacademy.org.uk/\\_filecache/71b/28a/5447-principals-update-07122021-1.pdf](https://www.gosforthacademy.org.uk/_filecache/71b/28a/5447-principals-update-07122021-1.pdf)

## **Work over the holidays/first week back**

It is very important that students have time to rest and recover over the holidays. As the first week is staggered, students should have had some work set to do in the days they miss. Year 11 and Year 13, in particular, will have plenty of revision to do in preparation for their mock exams next half term which will count if exams are cancelled. However, if any student needs any support or further work in the first week back in January they should contact their class teacher.

## **Free School Meals vouchers over Holidays**

Vouchers to those eligible families should be with you by now.

## **Knightsbridge Parking Complaints**

I have received a complaint from residents in Knightsbridge about parental parking and pupils crossing the road between parked cars.

The summary of the complaint was:

- Abuse from parents and school children
- Children unsafely stepping out
- Parents parked on double yellow lines, often obscuring views
- Fear of an accident given current weather conditions and all of the above.

Newcastle City Council will be providing parking enforcement officers to monitor the area and where necessary issue tickets.

## **Finally...**

Everything you're doing helps ensure schools remain open and can give that crucial face-to-face education and experience we know is so important.

I hope you have a wonderful break and wishing you all the very best to you and your families for 2022.

Preit Chahal  
Principal