

18 December 2020

Dear Parent or Carer,

I hope this update finds you well. I wanted to start by thanking all of you for the amazing support you have shown to your young people and the school over the past term. Although it has been challenging with the restrictions we are all operating under, it has been a great term and we have been so impressed by the way students and staff have adapted and continued to focus on great learning and looking after each other throughout. We couldn't be successful without your support, so thank you.

This update contains important information about the Christmas holiday period, and the start back after the holidays in January.

1) Christmas Holidays- Confirmed Cases amongst students

Many of you will be aware that since September all schools have been responsible for tracing close contacts of confirmed COVID-19 cases that have happened in school. We have been asked to continue to do this into the holiday period. This is to cover students who may become symptomatic in the 48 hours after Thursday 17 December, but who may not receive a confirmed test result until next week.

Therefore, **we need parents or carers to report to us any confirmed positive results** from any KEVICC student to us as soon as possible.

This should be done by emailing studentabsences@kingedwardvi.devon.sch.uk with the name of the student, the date their symptoms started, and the date they tested positive.

We will then contact you to trace any close contacts and advise them of the need to self-isolate. This will be vital in helping keep our families and community safe.

2) Start of Term in January

Many of you will have seen press reports of the government statement released at 6.30pm last night around arrangements for schools in England for the start of term in January, including the proposed roll out of mass testing for asymptomatic students in secondary schools in the New Year and the government plan for a staggered start to the school year with some year groups accessing remote learning and not returning physically to school until 11 January.

We have spent today with other schools and the local authority in trying to get clarity on the detail behind these arrangements. Most of the guidance is yet to be published.

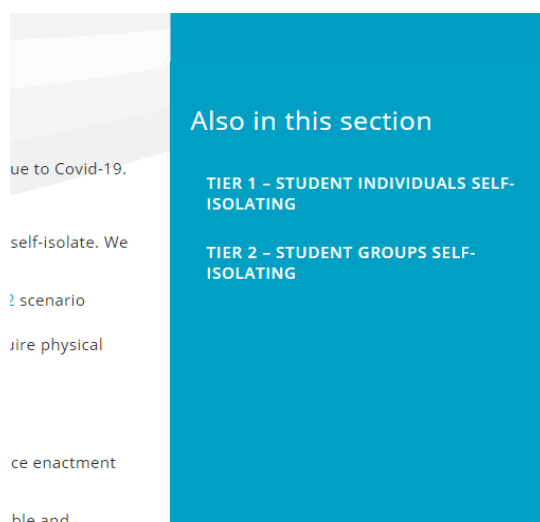
However, we are clear that the government has requested that schools only have on site students who are due to sit public exams in the summer of 2021 (ie. Y11, Y13 and Y14) for the week beginning 4 January, as well as asking schools to provide places for students who are vulnerable or have parents and carers who are keyworkers.

Therefore:

- **On Monday 4 January** only **Y11, Y13 and Y14** (including the Foundation Art) students should come into school. They should go to lessons as normal. The Y11 Mock Exams will run as planned.

All other year groups should remain at home and access remote learning, following their usual school timetable for Week B.

This remote learning is explained on the school website, by following 'remote learning' and then looking under "Tier 2"



Year 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12 students who are not eligible for a keyworker or vulnerable student place will return to the school site **on Monday 11 January**, and should continue to access their remote learning throughout the week.

- We will use Monday 4 January to communicate with parents and carers who are keyworkers or have a young person classed as vulnerable. We will seek to have provision in place for them to attend school from **Tuesday 5 January**.
- We will then use the remainder of the week to begin to **plan provision for regular testing of asymptomatic staff and students**. This testing will always be voluntary, and we will be able to communicate much more detail to you during that week about when this will be rolled out and how it will operate.

We know that this last-minute change will be disruptive to young people and families alike. It is also incredibly disruptive to school staff in terms of the timing of the announcement and lack of detail available. Please be assured we will work as hard as we can with you to resolve any issues that arise that week with remote learning, and to ensure any young people in the keyworker or vulnerable category are in school as soon as possible.

We have scheduled an online Q and A session for parents on **Monday 4 January at 4.30pm via google meets** so that we can help with any questions at that stage - hopefully by then we will have a clearer picture. The code for the meeting will be sent out that day before 3.30pm.

Once again, thank you for your support and patience at this time. As with all Headteacher colleagues across the country, I had hoped to be able to send a simple message of best wishes for the holidays without having to

try to give you as much clarity as possible on new arrangements. That said, please accept best wishes from all at KEVICC to you and your young people for a happy, peaceful and restful Christmas break. We can't wait to see you all again in the New Year.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alan Salt', written in a cursive style.

Alan Salt
Principal