



14th July 2021

Dear Parent or Carer,

I hope this finds you well. It has been such a busy Summer term that it feels difficult to believe we are finishing for the holidays next week.

Lots has happened since I last wrote to you, so apologies if there is catching up to do. I was recently on the local radio with a presenter who was under the impression that we were on the verge of the holidays and that Summer Term in schools was a relaxing quiet time.

Far from it! This time of year is always really busy, as we have all of our planning and organisation to get ready for the new school year in September. This year we are also dealing with running the entire assessment system for GCSE and A-levels, and of course managing everything COVID-related.

Frequently changing guidance and regulation has been difficult for schools and everyone. We know we are not alone in having to redraw plans and make last minute cancellations and difficult decisions. It is sadly part and parcel of our shared experiences over the past 18 months.

The above partly explains why I have held off sending this letter, as we have been continually having to second guess what announcements around COVID in schools might be made. However, now we have some clarity, so I can confirm a number of points for this term and the next school year;

1. COVID Safety

We are seeing rising rates of COVID locally. In the past 24 hours we have had 1 confirmed case in school. This means we have required some Y9 students and staff to self-isolate.

These is our first confirmed case in college since February.

We are closely monitoring the situation in school. We are also seeing students having to isolate because of confirmed cases amongst family members, and because they have been close contacts with positive cases outside of school. We are also aware of other local schools having multiple numbers of confirmed cases.

We have reminded all students of the simple things we can do to stay safe, and the first amongst these is not coming into school if they have symptoms that could be COVID, and making sure the school knows immediately if they have to self-isolate or take a test by emailing:

studentabsences@kingedwardvi.devon.sch.uk

Please do not send your young person in if they have symptoms that could be related to COVID-19.

Please help us to keep everyone safe by recognising and following any instruction to self-isolate or test.

As of next Monday, the NHS will take on contact tracing for any new cases we are notified of, except in exceptional circumstances where a school may be asked to assist with this.

We want to work together with you to make sure that you all get to your well-deserved summer break as safely as possible. So please continue to let us know via the student absences email without delay if your young person is unwell, has tested positive, or has been asked to self-isolate.

2. Change to term dates for 2021-22

We have an extra day's holiday for the Queen's Jubilee in May 2022. We have chosen to take this extra day on Tuesday 4 January 2022. This means all students return from the Christmas break on Wednesday 5 January 2022.

3. Staggered Start for September 2021

We now know we don't have the same bubble restrictions for our school when we return in September. This means that although we will be offering on-site COVID Lateral Flow testing for students on their return, we do not need to ask you to stay at home whilst we test each year group, so no repeat of the elongated staggered return to school we had back in March 2021.

However, we have had to cancel our physical transition visits for our new Y7s that should have happened this term (see below). This means most new Y7s have not had the chance to come and visit the College and get used to the site prior to starting.

To enable this to happen, we will be making **Monday 6 September our Y7 Induction Day**. This means **only Y7 and Y13** will attend that day.

Tuesday 7 September will be the return to school for all Y8, Y9, Y10, Y11 and Y12 students.

We hope you support this chance to make sure our fantastic new Y7s get a day to settle and find their feet before the rest of the school returns.

We will be sending separate information to all families on the lateral flow testing next week and again prior to the new term starting in September. There will be a testing consent form for you to complete and it would be very helpful if you can return this promptly to support our planning for September.

4. Site Consultation

You'll already be aware of our exciting plans to make a **multi-million pound investment** in our site over the coming years. The consultation on the first stage of this closes on 26 July, so please add your comments or questions via the College website here:

<https://www.kingedwardvi.devon.sch.uk/consultationpaper>

5. College Events

Our staff have been trying as hard as possible to make it a 'normal' term in some very 'not normal' circumstances. We were really pleased to be able to have our **dance festival, Sprung, our music festival, Duality, Achievement Evening and Sports Day** go ahead. However, these were without outside visitors to the College. These difficult decisions were made in view of the rising case numbers locally and with regard to our whole College risk assessment. Where possible we have had student audiences in bubbles, and have shared via our Youtube channel where we can!

6. Parent Voice Q and A

It has been so useful during the past 18 months to have regular catch ups with parents and carers. We are scheduling another Q and A for tomorrow Thursday 15 July at 5.30pm-6.30pm in case you have any comments, questions or feedback ahead of the Summer Holidays. The google code for this meeting is <https://meet.google.com/bzr-rjbw-zwa>. I look forward to seeing you there!

Finally, thank you once again for your support to your young people over the past year. It has been very tough at times, but we have continually been impressed by the resilience of our students and the staff who work with them. A simple "thank you" goes a long way. If you have time to contact or email a member of staff over the next week who has made a real difference to your young person's year at KEVICC, I can assure you it will be very greatly appreciated!

With best wishes,



Alan Salt
Principal