

7th January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Here we are again in a lockdown situation and this will clearly be the case at least until February half term. I can only hope that these stringent measures, along with vaccinations, will bring down the rate of virus transmission rapidly and that we are able to reopen next month. In the meantime, here are some key updates.

Critical workers

If you are classed as a critical worker and need your child to attend school so that you can go to work, you can register for full or part time provision. Please email admin@hydehighschool.uk for further information putting **CRITICAL WORKER** in the subject line. Children **MUST** be booked in in advance and will be supervised to access the work that is being set online by their subject teachers. Your child **must not** come into school if they, or any member of your household, develop symptoms of Covid-19.

Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or with social worker support

All pupils with an EHCP and/or with an allocated social worker are encouraged to attend school. Again, they will be supervised to access the work that is being set online by their subject teachers. We will be in touch with all relevant families to carry out an individual assessment and to agree provision.

Year 11 and exams

The government have stated that they “do not think it is possible or fair for all exams this summer to go ahead as planned” and all GCSE exams have been cancelled. The information relating to vocational exams is less clear and we will be writing very shortly to all parents of pupils due to sit vocational exams with further information. As yet, systems for deciding grades are still to be formulated by Ofqual, but it would appear that schools will again be asked to do this.

It is really important that Year 11 continue to engage fully with school if they are to be properly prepared for college courses/apprenticeships next year. Given the amount of time lost last year, we still have a significant amount of content to deliver to ensure that our pupils are ready for their chosen post-16 pathway. Each pupil’s attitude and effort over the coming weeks and months will impact on the grading process and I’m sure that they will maintain the hugely positive approach that they have demonstrated so far this year despite a few weeks working from home.

Accessing remote learning - laptops and internet

We are well aware of the challenges for some pupils in relation to accessing learning from home – if your child is struggling to access work due to lack of a functioning device or internet connection, please could you contact their Head of Year in the first instance and we will do our best to support you. I would also ask that any families who have a school device at home which was issued last year and which they no longer need, that they please return it as we now have a waiting list.

Free School Meals

Vouchers will be issued regularly to the families of all pupils eligible for free school meals. Queries can be emailed to admin@hydehighschool.uk with **FREE SCHOOL MEALS** in the subject line. If you think that you may be eligible to claim free school meals for your child/ren but haven't done so before, please go to <https://www.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/sims-tameside> to apply.

Keeping in touch

Whilst most pupils are not permitted to attend school, we are still very much here to support any of our pupils or families who may need it. Please do check our website for regular updates and for resources to help support your child both academically and in terms of their well-being during this difficult period. Our help line is available via help@hydehighschool.uk - this is monitored during school hours and can be used by pupils or parents to let us know of any concerns; a member of the pastoral team will respond.

Subject-specific queries can be directed to the relevant teacher via Google Classroom or by email.

We will contact all families by phone throughout lockdown to check how your child is getting on with remote learning; this will enable us to gauge how pupils are coping and to offer support if needed. Heads of Year are available as usual should you wish to talk to them.

On-site testing for Covid-19

Schools are still expected to set up rapid testing for asymptomatic staff and pupils. Obviously this will now start on a much smaller scale than was originally planned and I will write to you shortly with more information about the process and to request consent for your child to be tested when they return to school. Watch this space!

Reading

Please encourage your child to continue to read - whilst they are not able to go out and mix with friends, reading is a fantastic opportunity to escape from the here and now, to develop vocabulary and to broaden horizons.

A rather busy few days then and a quiet and mostly empty building once again. I hope that all our pupils and families keep safe and well.

Best wishes,



Andrea Radcliffe
Headteacher