



Newent Community School and Sixth Form Centre

Striving for Excellence

Principal • Mr Alan Johnson

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1 January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Happy New Year to you. I hope you had an enjoyable Christmas despite the restrictions placed upon us all.

When I last wrote to you in December it was on the last day of the Christmas term for us. It was also on the day that the government asked schools to start setting up mass testing programmes to be ready for the first day back in January. Despite my having some anxiety about the timescales we were given, my team dutifully began our planning to ensure that we could safely and efficiently implement this provision within our school. However, those plans that we produced at the start of the Christmas holiday have now been superseded by the announcement of a delayed opening of schools.

Therefore, I would like to detail exactly how we now intend to operate from the first day back to school in January. As ever, please understand that the plans that I am detailing here are my best endeavours given the guidance we have received at this point in time. The detailed planning that took place at the start of the Christmas holiday was made redundant just a week later when new expectations were placed upon us all. The same thing may happen to what I am about to share with you. If it does please accept my apologies, these are indeed strange times in which we are living.

On a positive note this last minute delay to the start of term whilst unexpected does offer us an extra week to get flow testing systems up and running, which can only be a good thing. I have done many things in my teaching career but establishing our own mini test and trace system is not one of them and I appreciate the extra time to get it right. We are still receiving Government guidance on the testing protocols, with further training webinars due to take place on Monday 4th January.

Tuesday 5th January 2021

From Tuesday 5th January we will provide face to face teaching for 'vulnerable students', those with parents/carers who are 'key workers' in line with government guidance.

Only vulnerable students and those with parents/carers who are key workers will be able to access our on-site provision during normal hours of school. This provision is for students who cannot be supervised at home. The definition of 'key workers' and 'vulnerable pupils' that we are obliged to work to are as follows:

Key workers are those who work in:

- Health and social care
- Education and childcare
- Key public services (including the justice system, religious staff, charities delivering key frontline services, those responsible for the management of the deceased, and journalists and broadcasters who are providing public service broadcasting)
- Local and national government (those who are involved in delivering the coronavirus response or essential public services)
- Food and other necessary goods

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- Public safety and national security
- Transport
- Utilities, communication and financial services

Vulnerable pupils are those who:

- Are assessed as being in need, including those with a child in need plan or child protection plan
- Are looked after by the local authority
- Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- Have been assessed as otherwise vulnerable by the school or LA, including children who:
 - Are on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services
 - Are adopted
 - Are at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')
 - Are living in temporary accommodation
 - Are young carers
 - May have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)

If you are not sure if you or your child fall under these definitions, please contact the school for assistance.

Students within school will continue to remain in strict Year group bubbles at all times. I would ask that you only send your child to school if you absolutely need to.

- **All other students, in all year groups, will receive Distance Learning information via MILK in the first instance.** Although there is no expectation to set work for Years 7-10 and 12 in the first week, we believe that it is in our students best interests to do so.
- **All external vocational exams will take place within school. Further information will be sent to students affected with updated plans.**
- **Mock exams for students in Years 12 and 13 will be postponed until week commencing 18th January.**
- **School transport will initially run as expected. This will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.**
- **Hot meals will be available at school**

Monday 11th January 2021

From Monday 11th January onwards we will also welcome students in Year 11 and 13 back into school. 'Key worker' and 'vulnerable pupil' provision will continue, as well as Distance Learning provision for students in all other year groups.

Monday 18th January 2021

From 18th January onwards we will welcome all year groups back on site.

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I know that this is a lot for everyone to take in just before the start of the new term and for many it will come as a huge disappointment. However, it is important to remember that the Governments ambition for mass asymptomatic testing of students and staff is a crucial element of our return to school in January. I will send out further details next week regarding our testing programme.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized initial 'A' followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Alan Johnson
Principal