



The Priory School

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Dear Parents and Carers

New government guidance issued last night has confirmed that we will only be open to Year 11 children, who are deemed vulnerable, pupil premium, have an EHCP or are children of key workers. If your child is in Years 7-10 and they fall in to one of these categories, please complete the form via this link by **23rd December** [Click here](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=X4pRTR73X0uDdSbvXs_1sS-JTdn5WN9Is712WYPZaIJUNjI5T1g1WjhZQ0xQMFRIROpOMVY5MEtDMi4u) or copy and paste this link into your browser bar https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=X4pRTR73X0uDdSbvXs_1sS-JTdn5WN9Is712WYPZaIJUNjI5T1g1WjhZQ0xQMFRIROpOMVY5MEtDMi4u

The government have issued us with an extra PD day to help prepare for the testing requirements and this will take place on 4th January. Year 11 and key worker children from other year groups should arrive back in school on Tuesday 5th January no later than 8.30am. Year 11 mock exams will still take place but will be moved back by one day. An adjusted timetable will be issued, and students informed today. All other year groups will return on 11th January at their usual staggered arrival times, unless they are self-isolating.

Although there is a promise of rapid testing (test results take 30 minutes to come through for each child) we are unlikely to have capacity to test all students immediately, if at all and we may only move to test those who have been identified as close contacts. **Participation will be entirely voluntary and we will send out permission request letters once the templates have arrived from the Department of Education.** We are being expected to recruit a 'testing team' and find people who are willing to carry out such testing, have them trained and find space for a test site. Our current zoning of school and the specifications needed for the test site, holding areas and disposal of tests is proving to be a huge logistical challenge. We are currently being asked to prioritise Year 11 and those key worker children who arrive back in the first week for two rapid tests, 3 days apart. As always, we will do what we can but my main aim is to ensure students are in lessons and receiving an education. **We may not be able to deliver any kind of testing due to the challenges I have outlined above.** I will send a separate letter with regard to testing once we have more information.

Our current operating plan has ensured we have had relatively low levels of positive cases and we have remained open to all year groups apart from Year 10 who had to self-isolate for two weeks in the middle of term. Our focus will continue to be on students and staff adhering closely to the wearing of face-masks, maintaining social distance and high standards of personal hygiene. **Please emphasise to your child(ren), in your discussion with them before they return, the importance of following these guidelines when they return in January, as they will be our primary focus.**

Remote Learning

For Years 7-10 we will be providing a range of remote learning for the first week of term beginning on Tuesday 5th January. Their first point of contact should be Show My Homework where staff will either post activities and resources or there will be a message to signpost them to a Teams lesson. They should log on to MS Teams at 8.30am every morning for a session with their tutor. This will help them to keep some form of routine. There will be at least four hours of remote learning provided each day. This will either be in the format of resources, narrated powerpoints, podcasts, recorded lessons or live lessons and will begin with an introduction from the teacher; a good variety will be provided. Access to a phone, tablet, laptop or computer will be needed. The government has not provided the devices they promised as yet, but our network manager is in communication to see what can be done. We have invested in a limited number from school funds but unfortunately cannot afford to provide these for all and these devices will have to be prioritised for families in need.

Students in Years 7-9

To help support them with accessing Teams as an online platform for live or recorded lessons students will be receiving a brief summary in tutor time, today. This tutorial will be available on the school website so either they or yourselves can refer back to it if needed. There is also a remote learning tutorial, which two Year 11 students have compiled to assist them with the uploading of any work.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in grey ink that reads "A Pope".

Mrs A Pope
Headteacher