



THE ECCLESBOURNE SCHOOL

'Learning Together For The Future'

Head Teacher
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Tuesday 4 January 2022

Start of Term Arrangements – January 2022

Dear parents and carers,

I hope you are enjoying a peaceful and restful Christmas holiday. The government has issued schools with new instructions for managing safely in the context of the increase in prevalence of coronavirus locally and nationally and so I am writing to you to update you about the arrangements in place for the start of the spring term.

Mass Testing

As was the case at the start of this term in September, when students return to school after Christmas we will be delivering a testing programme for students without coronavirus symptoms using COVID-19 lateral flow tests. In line with national guidance, we will test students once as they return to school. After this test on return, pupils should continue to test in line with government guidelines. Students will continue to be provided with home testing kits so that they can complete lateral flow tests twice weekly at home.

The on-site test will take place on the first day students return to school. On their first day in school students will remain with their year group and will be supervised to complete work set by their teachers before returning to normal lessons in the afternoon. It is important that students in Years 10 to 13 bring their school laptops fully charged as they will need them to access their work for the day. Work will be set for all students from Monday 10 January and students should check Show My Homework to access their work.

Students will return to school from the date set out below:

Monday 10 January Year 11, 12 and Year 13*

Tuesday 11 January Year 7 and Year 8

Wednesday 12 January Year 9 and Year 10

If you have already provided permission for the school to administer these tests, there is no need for you to do so again. If you have not provided permission and wish to do so, please log on to ParentPay and access the Covid consent item. Students should bring a packed lunch to school on Monday to Wednesday. Those who are entitled to a free school meal will be provided with one. If your child is entitled to a free school meal and will be learning from home on the days shown above, we can provide meals for collection from the school site. Please email: info@ecclesbourne.derbyshire.sch.uk if you would like to collect a meal on the day your child will be studying from home.

**Year 11 students who have Cambridge National PE examination on Monday 10th will be tested first at 9.00am so that they can sit their public exam.*

Covid Precautions

We will continue to take a range of precautions to ensure the safety of students and staff as part of our coronavirus risk assessment. We will continue to operate our existing systems to manage movement around the school site. Signage and staff guidance will continue to emphasise the importance of hand sanitising regularly throughout the day. Teachers and the site team will ensure that there is good ventilation with windows and doors left open for inside spaces. Enhanced cleaning provision will continue. Please provide your child with a face mask for travelling on school buses and to be used in communal spaces. On their return to school students will continue to be provided with Lateral Flow Device testing kits and so they can test twice weekly and report their test result in the usual way.

The Department for Education have changed their guidance on face masks so that it is now recommended that they should be worn in classrooms as well as in communal areas in secondary schools. This advice on face coverings in classrooms will be in place until Wednesday 26 January, when Plan B regulations are currently scheduled to expire, at which point it will be reviewed. If you would prefer your child to be exempted from this requirement, please contact school using this address info@ecclesbourne.derbyshire.sch.uk.

Self-Isolation Rules

Since Wednesday 22 December, the 10-day self-isolation period for students who record a positive PCR test result for COVID-19 has been reduced to 7 days in most circumstances, unless they cannot test for any reason. Students may now take LFD tests on day 6 and day 7 of their self-isolation period. Those who receive two negative test results are no longer required to complete 10 full days of self-isolation. The first test must be taken no earlier than day 6 of the self-isolation period and tests must be taken 24 hours apart. If both these test results are negative, and your child does not have a high temperature, they may end their self-isolation after the second negative test result and return to school from day 8. Arrangements have also changed for close contacts of those who have tested positive. Those who are fully vaccinated, or children and young people aged between 5 and 18 years and 6 months, identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19, should now take an LFD test every day for seven days and continue to attend school as normal, unless they have a positive test result or develop symptoms at any time.

Year 11 and Year 13 Mock Examinations

Mock Examinations take place from 17th to 28th January. They always play an important role in providing an indication of the progress students are making towards achieving their target grades in their GCSEs and A Levels this summer. In addition, the mock exams form an integral part of the targeted teaching and support we will provide to students as they prepare for their final exams. Study Leave for Year 11 and 13 will be from Monday 17th January until Friday 28th January 2022 inclusive. This has been carefully explained to the students and a copy of the examination timetables are available here:

<https://www.ecclesbourne.derbyshire.sch.uk/pastoral/external-examinations/exam-timetables>

We wrote to you last term to explain that Ofqual have published contingency arrangements in the unlikely event that exams are cancelled next summer. In this event, Teacher Assessed Grades would be used instead. In determining these grades, the upcoming mock examinations would form part of the evidence to support this process. Mocks would not be the only evidence used and grades students receive in their mock examinations are not final Teacher Assessed Grades. But students will want to

do their best and so it is important that they are well prepared. Your child's teachers have guided them with advice and revision materials. As there will be advance notice from Ofqual in February of what will be examined in summer 2022, teachers have made clear to students what content is to be revised and prepared for the mocks. We will do all we can to ensure every student achieves their potential.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a very happy and healthy New Year. I hope you enjoy the rest of the holiday and look forward to seeing you again in the new term.

Yours sincerely,

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

James McNamara

Head Teacher