



31st December 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Returning to school in January

Despite the disruption during this Christmas break, I hope that you had a chance to rest and relax. I am writing to you today with a further update, as yesterday afternoon we were told by the Department for Education (DfE) that there will be a change in arrangements for the return to school over the next few weeks. We apologise for the late notification of these changes; we are sharing this with you as quickly as we can.

In summary - as before:

- We have an INSET day in place for all staff on Monday 4th January
- Students whose parents are key workers or who are determined by the DfE as 'vulnerable' are to attend school as originally planned from Tuesday 5th January. Please check the attached information provided for further guidance on this.

However, there is now a change for the following students:

- Year 11 students will return to school on Monday the 11th of January
- All other students (Year 7 – 10) will now have their normal lessons from Tuesday 5th until Friday 15th January delivered remotely. They are required to return to school in person on Monday 18th January, 2021.

The DfE has explained that the purpose of this change is for two reasons:

1. To create a bigger gap of time between young people mixing at Christmas and returning to school, reducing the risk of those who have Covid-19 but no symptoms of sharing the infection
2. To allow schools more time to set up Covid-19 testing for students. The reason for more testing is that it will be possible to identify those with the virus but without symptoms so that they can self-isolate, minimising the spread of the virus and the disruption caused.

Covid-19 testing within school

We are currently developing our plans for delivering Covid-19 testing for both students and staff. We will be in touch with you again next week when we know more about our local arrangements, and how we will gather your permission and consent for your child to be tested ahead of them returning to school. We will also explain arrangements for those who do not consent to the testing.

It is of the utmost importance that we plan, implement and then assess how best we can deliver Covid-19 testing within school. To do this we will take the next fortnight to ensure everything is in place, and that we have received your consent. Please note therefore, that we will not be testing any young people before Monday 18th January.

What do I do now?

If you are a key worker or your young person meets the DfE criteria listed in the guidance provided with this letter, and they are well and do not have any Covid-19 symptoms (or are in a self-isolate period due to a confirmed case of Covid-19), please ensure that they attend school from Tuesday 5th January. If you have not already done so, please confirm they will attend by emailing us admin.requests@oasisoldham.org. When

attending the Academy, we ask that they bring their earphones to allow them to access the online learning. We will provide computers in order for them to do this but ask that they provide their own earphones, should they have them.

If your child is not eligible to come to school next week, please check the following sections on Free School Meals and Access to Remote Learning.

Free School Meals

If your child receives free school meals, but they are not eligible to come to school next week (only children of key workers or those deemed 'vulnerable' are eligible), then they will be able to collect a hamper from either Tuesday or Wednesday from the Academy. Please confirm, by telephone or email a.burns@oasisoldham.org if you wish to receive a hamper – we will then notify you of your collection date. Please note: we will not be providing vouchers for this period; the hampers will replace this.

Access to Remote Learning

If your young person has any difficulty in accessing remote learning, please contact their Pastoral Leader or Head of Year and we will reply before Tuesday the 5th of January.

We look forward to seeing all eligible students (please see guidance at the end of the letter) at the Academy from Tuesday 5th January at their usual start time and all other students online at 8:30 am where they will partake in their usual Pastoral Curriculum session albeit remotely. All students working online will access their work via Teams and follow their usual timetable. We will be monitoring attendance from Tuesday 5th January. Any students not attending their online learning will be contacted. Attendance online is compulsory unless there is an approved absence which will need to be recorded in the same way as usual.

We understand that this is a lot of information take on board, we will be in touch again next week with further information on Covid-19 testing and your consent, and we will also be publishing updates on our website in due course.

Thank you for your continued support to the Academy and I look forward to seeing all of our students learning online from 5th January at 8:15 and all together again on site as one community on 18th January. If there are any additional changes, as always, I will be in contact.

Yours sincerely



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POSITIVE STEPS

Government guidance: Critical workers and vulnerable children who can access schools or educational settings - 3rd December 2020

Government guidance on who are critical workers, and which children are deemed vulnerable is provided below, and also on the government's website.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

Vulnerable children and young people include those who:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children and young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued full-time attendance, this might include:
 - children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services
 - adopted children, those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')
 - those living in temporary accommodation, those who are young carers
 - those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)
 - others at the provider and local authority's discretion

Critical workers

Parents whose work is critical to the coronavirus (COVID-19) response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors outlined in the following sections.

Health and social care

This includes, but is not limited to, doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, care workers, and other frontline health and social care staff including volunteers; the support and specialist staff required to maintain the UK's health and social care sector; those working as part of the health and social care supply chain, including producers and distributors of medicines and medical and personal protective equipment.

Education and childcare

- childcare
- support and teaching staff
- social workers
- specialist education professionals who must remain active during the coronavirus (COVID-19) response to deliver this approach

Key public services

- those essential to the running of the justice system
- religious staff
- charities and workers delivering key frontline services
- those responsible for the management of the deceased
- journalists and broadcasters who are providing public service broadcasting

Local and national government

- those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the coronavirus (COVID-19) response
- or delivering essential public services, such as the payment of benefits, including in government agencies and arms length bodies

Food and other necessary goods, those involved in food

- production
- processing
- distribution
- sale and delivery
- as well as those essential to the provision of other key goods (for example hygienic and veterinary medicines)

Public safety and national security, including:

- police and support staff
- Ministry of Defence civilians
- contractor and armed forces personnel (those critical to the delivery of key defence and national security outputs and essential to the response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak)
- fire and rescue service employees (including support staff)
- National Crime Agency staff
- those maintaining border security, prison and probation staff and other national security roles, including those overseas

Transport

This includes those who will keep the air, water, road and rail passenger and freight transport modes operating during the coronavirus (COVID-19) response, including those working on transport systems through which supply chains pass.

Utilities, communication and financial services

- staff needed for essential financial services provision (including but not limited to workers in banks, building societies and financial market infrastructure)
- the oil, gas, electricity and water sectors (including sewerage)
- information technology and data infrastructure sector and primary industry supplies to continue during the coronavirus (COVID-19) response
- key staff working in the civil nuclear, chemicals, telecommunications (including but not limited to network operations, field engineering, call centre staff, IT and data infrastructure, 999 and 111 critical services)
- postal services and delivery
- payments providers
- waste disposal sectors