

Our Ref: SDN/KON

December 2021

ALL PARENTS/CARERS

Dear Parent/Carer



End of Autumn Term Letter & Spring Term 2022 Update

I hope this letter finds you and your families safe and well. As we head towards the festive period, I thought I would take this opportunity to write to you all to share both our thanks and appreciation for your support over the last 12 months but also to share with you some of our plans and arrangements as we head towards January 2022.

As you will be aware, this has been another busy year filled with the challenges that COVID-19 continues to present us all with, but as a community, yet again, I feel we have risen to the challenge! Your co-operation and patience have been greatly appreciated and we are incredibly proud of the tenacity and resilience that has been shown by so many of our students, parents/carers and staff over the last 12 months. Whether that be supporting us in what needs to happen from a COVID-19 perspective, attending face to face/virtual evenings or supporting Friends of Dormston Community, Parental engagement has been amazing.

Understanding what the 'new normal' looks like and feels like may still seem hard to get to grips with and it is still very difficult to plan for things with any certainty. All we can do is keep pushing forward and adapting to situations as they occur. I think each and every one of us has demonstrated our core value of 'Resilience' this year on more than one occasion, so thank you.

Return to School Lateral Flow Testing - January 2022

As has been the case previously, the government are requesting that all students and staff take 'in school' lateral flow testing prior to returning to school in January 2022. All schools will therefore be staggering the return for students during week commencing 4 January 2022 to allow for tests to take place following advice from the DfE. **A separate letter detailing these arrangements in more detail will be sent out shortly.**

Any students not taking part in testing should return to school with the rest of their cohort as detailed below. Please note that any students who have had COVID-19 in the last 90 days prior to returning to school do not need to take part in lateral flow testing and should return to school with the rest of their cohort as follows:

- Wednesday 5 January 2022 - Year 10 & 11;
- Thursday 6 January 2022 - Years 7, 8 & 9.

Uniform Standards & Behaviour Expectations

When we return in January 2022 it is essential that the standards of 'Prepared for Success' are upheld and maintained from the outset. One of the most important principles of this, is ensuring that students follow our uniform policy. May we respectfully remind parents that any nail extensions students have over the Christmas break must be rectified before they return to school. Uniform will be checked on the return to school. Please see attached uniform poster to remind you what these uniform standards are. Thank you in advance for co-operating with this matter.

Year 11 Mock Exams Update

As you will be aware, our Year 11 students have recently undertaken their first round of Mock Examinations. I'm sure we don't need to tell you that in the current climate these exams are more important than ever. Results of the December Mock exams will be shared with students in January 2022. The second set of Mock Exams will take place W/C 7 March 2022. At the moment, we are still working on the basis that GCSE examinations will be taking place as normal in the summer and we will endeavour to keep you informed of any information regarding GCSEs as it becomes available. The government are indicating, however, that GCSEs will be tailored to reflect the content that has been covered and students will be given an indication of the knowledge they will need to acquire before their examination. This means that revision sessions are more crucial than ever. I know that many parents/carers will feel that their child has missed out on

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so much but with some dedicated and clearly structured revision, students could turn this difficult situation to their advantage and we urge all students to design an effective revision timetable and attend revision sessions wherever possible.

Visible Learning Programme

Positive pupil outcomes is at the heart of what we do, especially during these very unpredictable times. We acknowledge that this may not always have been perfect for every child, all the time, but we are totally committed to doing the very best we can and seek to further improve the educational provision we offer to all of our students both during COVID-19 and beyond. We have embarked on a programme called 'Visible Learning' which is now filtering its way into classrooms. This is a 3-year programme which the school has invested in. The first 12 months involved Senior Management Team gathering evidence and understanding the key strengths and weaknesses of the school. Years 2 & 3 are about the ways we ensure that every child in the classroom receives an education that is right for them and has impact. We will tell you more about what we expect to see in our classrooms and the impact in future correspondence.

Curriculum Review 2022

There are many factors which contribute to a school's overall success. One crucial element is a rich and dynamic curriculum that is fit for purpose and seeks to engage students. A curriculum review is therefore underway at Dormston School which will continue in January 2022 with an independent review provided by an external assessor. This will form the basis of our next steps. We need to be able to offer a curriculum that will benefit all students. This will result in a revised curriculum offer which will cater for the educational needs and aspirations of every child. More details of this and the reasoning behind it will be shared with parents next year. The curriculum information on our website is also changing in January 2022 so please browse this updated information.

Eco-Friendly Plans

As you will be aware, climate change has dominated the news. As a school we feel we have a duty to encourage our students to become involved in this global issue as they are our citizens of the future. We hope to set up an Eco Committee that will design projects both within school and for the wider community. This will include litters picks and paper recycling. We will share more information about this with you in the new year.

Thank you once again for all your support over the last 12 months. We really do appreciate your patience and understanding whilst we all continue to navigate our way through living with COVID-19.

Wishing you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas.

Yours sincerely



Mr Dixon
Head Teacher