

6 January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

In light of the government announcement on Monday 4th January, I wanted to take the opportunity to write to you and share our plans for the coming weeks and months. The Prime Minister has had to act due to rising infection rates of Covid-19 across the country and part of the national lockdown includes the closing of schools until the end of February half-term for all students except for the children of key workers and vulnerable children.

One of the most significant parts of the announcement was that “not **all** exams” would go ahead in the summer. The government will be working with Ofqual and school leaders over the coming days and weeks to determine how students will be assessed and grades awarded. We will update you with information as soon as we know but for now we must reinforce that:

- All January and February BTEC exams are scheduled to go ahead as normal. Students will receive information through Google Classroom and via text, email and Twitter to confirm the details of when they should come into the academy.
- We expect that some public examinations will take place in the summer and therefore students should continue to engage with their on-line learning throughout this period of lockdown.

I believe very strongly that the purpose of schools is to provide more than just qualifications. The skills, knowledge and experiences that we provide stick with young people throughout their lives and shape the adults that they become. We learnt a lot during the national lockdown last year about how to deliver an effective and meaningful curriculum and I am confident that what we are offering your children is the best possible provision we can. Your children will receive, whenever possible, a full 25 hour timetable of “live” teaching from their normal class teacher through their Google Classroom. Your child will continue to receive a daily tutorial session where they will be encouraged to discuss and engage with current affairs and have the opportunity to talk to their teachers and peers.

If you or your partner is a key worker, or if your child is classed as vulnerable, then the school will remain open, as now, and we look forward to seeing them in school today and beyond as normal for teaching and learning.

As you know, we have worked incredibly hard since the start of the pandemic in March to keep our school as safe as possible, and I would like to take this opportunity to remind you of the safety measures in place at our school:

- All students and staff must wear a face covering in communal areas, unless exempt
- Everyone is expected to remain in their allocated bubbles
- Students are encouraged to wash their hands regularly throughout the day

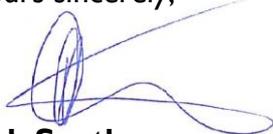
Please note we are trying to work with windows open in classrooms for ventilation. As the cold days have returned, and with the need for ventilation in mind, pupils may need a few more layers of clothing, such as sweatshirts, tights or leggings underneath skirts or plain fleeces without a hood or large brand logos.

The academy is currently being set up to administer mass testing of staff and students for Covid-19 and the preparations for this will continue throughout the lockdown ready for the return of staff and students. We will be in touch with you over the coming weeks to explain how and why the mass testing is to be carried out. We will be asking you to give consent for your child to have these tests on their return. You will be able to find the consent form by following the link on the academy website.

If you would like to contact the academy during the lockdown period I would recommend using the enquiries@newbold.outwood.com email address as our reception staff will be predominantly working from home. We will communicate with you through the academy text message service, our Twitter account (@OutwoodNewbold) and via email. Our staff will be working tirelessly throughout the coming weeks to ensure that your children are safeguarded and receiving the best possible education so please bear with us when waiting for a response to your emails and calls.

I would like to thank you for the support that you have shown our academy over the previous weeks and months. We feel privileged to teach your children and know that our job is made easier by your actions as parents. Please look after each other during this period of lockdown, stay safe and know that you can turn to us for help if it is needed.

Yours sincerely,



Rob Southern
Head of School



Steve Roberts
Lead Principal