



5 January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

Following my email last night please find below the detailed updates and information I can currently provide to parents as a result of the Prime Minister's announcement.

In-School Provision

Backwell School will be offering in-school supervision for children of critical workers and vulnerable students during Term 3.

We will also offer in-school supervision for vulnerable students and those who cannot access remote learning from home. Students in school will be undertaking remote learning, with the rest of their classmates, using school facilities - they will not receive face-to-face teacher led provision.

Please note that we have limited spaces for in-school supervision as teachers are delivering live learning following the school timetable. In the event that we have fewer spaces than demand, we will allocate places using a priority system based on the information parents provide, focussing on offering spaces for those in frontline NHS services. The Government definition of Critical Worker can be [found here](#). Please note we may telephone you to ask you whether it is absolutely essential that your child is in school or whether there is a safer alternative. We may also contact your employer to validate your key worker supervision claim.

To request in-school supervision for your child(ren) in the week of Monday 11 January please complete this [online form](#). The deadline for completion is 10.00 am on Thursday 7 January – this is so we can review all requests and plan accordingly.

Going forward, in-school supervision will need to be booked on a weekly basis, using an online form; this will be placed on the front page of our website. Parents will have until 10.00 am on a Thursday to request supervision for the following week. Please note we are unable to add to your supervision requests once the deadline has passed. Should there be an issue with us providing supervision for your child, as detailed above, we will contact you directly as a matter of urgency. If you do not hear from us please assume your request for in-school supervision is accepted.

Students who use home-to-school-transport (coaches to school) will continue to be able to do so. We are working with North Somerset to confirm the arrangements from next week onwards. We will confirm these details with relevant parents at the end of this week.

Students coming into school should be wearing school uniform and they should also bring their face covering with them. They will also need their books, pens and pencils and headphones to access remote learning whilst on the school site.

Remote Learning

Thanks very much to parents for all the messages we received yesterday regarding remote learning. We were thrilled to have so much encouraging feedback – it appeared that students and parents alike found that live lessons following the normal school timetable was a positive experience. We're equally grateful for any feedback where things don't go according to plan. We are anxious to iron out any technological problems as promptly as possible so your communications are extremely helpful.

We have issued a few reminders to students in tutor time today regarding remote learning including:

- Follow your normal school timetable and timings and log on at the start of each lesson.
- The chat function on Teams must only be used, appropriately, when the teacher gives permission to do so.
- Where you would have had PE, there will not be a live lesson: have a break or do some home learning (GCSE/A Level PE and Sports Studies lessons will have live lessons.).
- Have your camera on as this helps teaching and learning work effectively.
- Check Frog and your school email regularly throughout the day.

COVID Testing

We are still preparing and training for carrying out lateral flow COVID-19 tests at school. We aim to start testing staff weekly and to seek parental consent for the testing of the students who will continue to attend school during the lockdown period. We will also continue to prepare for the possibility of mass testing of other students when they return to school in Term 4.

Therefore, as per our email yesterday, if you would like to give permission for your child to be included in on-site testing please complete [this online form](#) giving your consent by 10.00 am on Friday 8 January. Thank you to those parents who have already completed this form.

Examinations

We know that examinations for Year 11 and Year 13 students will not go ahead *as normal* this summer, but we do not know what combination of external testing and internal assessment might be devised to grade students. Until we hear details from the Government, it is important that students continue to follow their programmes of study.

Trial Exams are scheduled for Year 11 in the week starting Monday 18 January and for Year 13 in the week starting Monday 25 January: we will make decisions very soon about these exams and communicate our plans to you.

We want to reassure students in these year groups that the work they are doing now will matter and that we are committed to doing all we can to make sure their hard work – up to now and from now on – is properly rewarded.

January examinations in 'vocational' subjects – Sports Studies in Year 11, Performing Arts (Year 12 and Year 13), Applied Science (Year 12 and 13), Health & Social Care (Year 13) and Business Studies (Year 13) – are currently scheduled to go ahead as planned.

Free School Meals

We will continue to provide free school meals to eligible families through the voucher scheme.

Year 9 Options

We are running an online programme this year to help students and parents consider subject choices for their GCSE studies. Further details and more information, including videos, will be available on Frog from Wednesday 27 January.

Year 11 Catch-up Sessions

We have already postponed the Year 11 catch up sessions organised for this week and we have contacted the Year 11 students who were booked in. We will make further decisions around scheduling and delivering the rest of the Year 11 programme in due course.

Parents' Evenings

There are several this term, starting with Year 12 next Thursday. These evenings will take place online as planned. Parents/Carers will be sent a reminder for the Year 12 parents' evening later this week: booking goes live on Thursday.

Thank you for your continued support. Please be assured that the wellbeing and education of our students remains our top priority as we all adapt to this further period of lockdown.

Mr J Nunes
Headteacher