



Venerable Bede Church of England Academy

Dayspring Trust



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DAI/CM1

5th January 2021

Dear Parents / Carers

Further to my email last night, I would like to provide you with some additional information regarding the current situation in school due the National Tier 5 restrictions which have been put into place.

The Government summary document "[Education and Childcare](#)" outlines all of the rules and regulations around the current restrictions, as well as what you can expect from schools. I understand that some of this documentation is still to be updated, but the link will still be active during this process.

As outlined in the document, schools remain open **ONLY** to the children of **Critical Workers** and **Vulnerable pupils**. It is also vital that these pupils only attend school when absolutely necessary. One of the main reasons for this is so that we all play our part to limit the potential for the spread of coronavirus. Although scientific evidence outlines that young people will not necessarily suffer adversely from the impact of coronavirus, they will transmit it the same as anyone else, and could pass the virus on to other members of their family and anyone that they come into contact with.

As part of our updated Risk Assessment, we intend to implement voluntary **weekly testing for coronavirus** of both **staff and pupils** who will be accessing school between now and February half term. This is so that anyone who is asymptomatic can be identified as soon as possible and supported to self-isolate to minimise the impact that they could have in spreading the disease. More details on this will follow.

We are also introducing the compulsory wearing of face coverings in school for both staff and pupils in all areas. The exceptions to this will be at lunchtime whilst eating, and if a pupil/staff is exempt from wearing a face covering. All other protective factors as outlined in our risk assessment will continue to remain in place.

If your child is eligible for free school meals, we intend to continue to make payments directly into bank accounts until such a time as the Government re-introduce a voucher scheme. Should you have any queries regarding this please contact susan.pink@venerablebede.co.uk.

As we are all now in a National Tier 5 "**stay and work from home where possible**" state of alert; all staff who can work from home will be expected to do so. We do fully intend to keep the Academy open and functioning. However, this means that we will be **operating a reduced staffing allocation in the building** itself. As has been the case since September, this means that no one should be coming into school without an appointment, except in an emergency situation, or with prior permission.

Remote Teaching

It is essential that pupils log on and follow their normal school timetable each day. We will be taking registers and making contact with those parents / carers who's children do not participate in lessons. No one knows how long this period of remote learning will last, so it is essential that all pupils engage fully in the remote learning process. All lessons will follow each individual pupil's timetable each day.



The overwhelming majority of lessons will be delivered live through the Microsoft Teams platform - unless a member of staff is in school "on rota" - supervising the children of Critical workers or our vulnerable pupils, or unless they are absent from school. In these instances, work will be set for pupils in FOLDr, and the pupils will be informed of what to do. Teaching staff will also be available to support pupils during their scheduled lesson time to support them with their learning, using the chat function in the Teams platform. Please take the time to re-read the Remote Learning support material which was sent out to everyone previously (a copy of which is on the school website in the [RESOURCES](#) section. Teachers will be able to deliver live lessons.

PLEASE NOTE – from Wednesday 06/01/21 Critical worker children and Vulnerable Pupils who are in school, will be taught in "Year group" or smaller group bubbles because teachers will be working from home delivering live lessons through Teams. Pupils in school will access their lessons online delivered by their teachers at the same time as the other pupils in their class. They will follow a "normal" school day in school. It would help us if pupils were able to bring in a set of earphones so that they can be plugged into their computer so that they can hear their teacher online. We will provide a set for pupils who do not have their own.

Again, for the children of Critical workers and vulnerable children, we will have breakfast club open each day from 7.45 a.m., and we will be operating a full lunch service. It is equally acceptable for pupils to bring their own lunch if they prefer.

Exams Update

Last night the Government indicated that Y11 Exams this year would "not go ahead as normal". The detail of what this looks like is not yet known. It is critical that all Y11 pupils focus fully on all of their lessons. We will no doubt find out in the near future how Y11 grades will be calculated. Each pupil needs to work their hardest to show their class teacher exactly what they are capable of so that at the appropriate time an assessment of their ability can be made.

Y11 pupils were due to have "**Mock Exams**" over the coming weeks. Clearly these mocks cannot take place at the moment. We will share further information with you regarding this in our next curriculum update.

Update on BTec exams – at this point in time, "**Travel and Tourism**" and "**Health and Social Care**" BTec exams are still scheduled to take place on **Wednesday 3 and Friday 5 February**. There is mounting pressure to cancel these exams from many sectors, but this has not happened yet. Our current advice for our pupils is to remain focused and work as if these exams will take place. If the situation changes, we will let you know.

Thank you for taking the time to read all of our updates. We know that this can be onerous especially if only a short section applies directly to your child. However, we feel that it is important that everyone has an understanding of what is currently happening across school.

Yours faithfully



Mr. D. Airey
Headteacher

