

Friday 18 December 2020

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Schools

- The Bicester School
  - Bicester Technology Studio
  - Theale Green School
  - UTC Heathrow
  - UTC Oxfordshire
  - UTC Reading
  - UTC Swindon
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Dear Parents,

I am writing to provide some clarity over the announcements made by the government over recent days concerning mass testing and a phased return to school for secondary school.

Yesterday the government confirmed that all secondary schools and colleges in England will be able to offer staff and students an extra round of free coronavirus testing from the first week of January. This will help deliver the national priority of keeping as many students and teachers as possible in school and college, whilst fighting the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19).

The government have agreed to a three-strand approach to managing transmission of Coronavirus (COVID-19):

1. Supporting schools to set a regular testing programme to test staff and the close contacts of staff and students who test positive for the virus (as announced on Tuesday 15 December).
2. Reducing the number of children in secondary schools and colleges for the first full week of January, with vulnerable children, children of critical workers and those in exam cohorts, receiving face-to-face education, with others learning remotely.
3. Offering secondary schools and colleges help, support and facilities to test as many pupils as possible as they resume face-to-face education

We will write to you further regarding the protocol for testing in the New Year when further guidance will be available.

With the above in mind, an **additional Inset day has been agreed for Tuesday 6 January 2021**. Therefore, all students in Years 11 and 13 will return to school for normal face-to-face lessons on **Wednesday 6 January 2021**. Vulnerable students and children of critical workers also return to school from Wednesday 6 January and will follow the remote learning provided for the other students in their year groups. The school will contact parents again on Monday 4 January to confirm arrangements for vulnerable students and children of critical workers.

All other students will follow a remote learning timetable from **Wednesday 6 January to Friday 8 January** and will return to their normal lessons in school from **Monday 11 January 2021**.

I am sorry to be writing at the last moment of a very long term, to communicate changes at the start of January, but I felt it was important to inform you of our plans as soon as possible.

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a restful and safe Christmas holiday.

Yours sincerely



Joanne Harper  
CEO