



18 December 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

At the end of a very challenging term I am writing to thank you for the part you have played in helping us to continue to deliver a quality education to our students, both in the classroom and online. I am incredibly proud of the work that the whole staff team have done this term, and how our students have responded to our new systems, but I have also really appreciated your support.

Part of our school vision is that we will 'Overcome obstacles to success'. COVID-19 has certainly provided the opportunity to show that we can do this. The low rates of transmission of COVID-19 in school, and in the local community, are a result of the actions we have taken together. Thank you for the part you have played in this.

Notification of Positive COVID-19 cases during the Christmas Holiday

If your child develops symptoms of COVID-19, within 48 hours of them last being in school, and receives a positive test result, please notify us of the result as soon as possible by emailing:

contact@josephrowntree.york.sch.uk

Please include the following information in your email:

- The last date your child attended school
- The date their symptoms started
- The date their test took place
- The date of the positive result notification (please include a copy in the email)
- Details of any other member of our school community with whom they had "close contact" on the 2 days prior to the start of their symptoms and afterwards. This should include those they have travelled to/from school with and those they were in close contact with at break or lunchtime or at other times outside of classes.

If we do have confirmation of a student, or member of staff, testing positive we will inform parents/carers if their child is identified as a contact through a text and WEDUC message.

If your child has a positive test result, but were not in school within 48 hours of them developing symptoms, you do not need to contact us during the holiday period, as we will not need to ask any other students to self-isolate.

If your child will still be self-isolating at the start of term, please contact school to inform us of this on Monday 04 January. The school office will not be open prior to this date.

HEADTEACHER: Mr David Hewitt, BA (Hons), NPQH

DEPUTY HEAD: Mr A Haigh, BSc (Hons)

DEPUTY HEAD: Ms C Mann, BA (Hons)

"Working together to achieve success"

Staggered start to term in January

You will be aware that the Department for Education has released information yesterday about testing programmes in school, and a staggered return to school in January.

We have a training day on Monday 04 January so the new staggered arrangements for the start of term are summarised in the table below.

Year Groups	Arrangements for the start of term
7, 8, 9 and 10	On-line learning from Tuesday 5 th January to Friday 8 th January. Return to school at the normal time on Monday 11 th January.
11	Return to school at the normal time on Tuesday 5 th January
12	On-line learning from Tuesday 5 th January to Friday 8 th January. Return to school at the normal time on Monday 11 th January.
13	Return to school at the normal time on Tuesday 5 th January

On-line learning

Students in Year 7-10 who are working at home, during the first week back after the Christmas holiday, have been briefed today about how to access their online learning. Mr Coleman will send details to Y12 students and their parents/carers.

This online learning will be different to our usual online tasks as teachers will be available to teach live lessons in their normal timetabled slots. To allow teachers movement, and set up time between teaching Year 11 and Year 13 lessons, to classrooms where online lessons will be delivered, we have reduced the length of lessons to 40 minutes. Students will be set tasks that go beyond their online lessons to ensure that learning time is not lost.

Students should access these live lessons through their Google Classroom. A link will be made available shortly before the start of each lesson that students should follow to access the live lesson.

The timings of on-line lessons will be the same for all students in Year groups 7-10 and 12. These times are as follows:

- Lesson 1: 9.15 – 9.55
- Lesson 2: 10.10 – 10.50
- Lesson 3: 11.30 – 12.10
- Lesson 4: 12.25 – 13.05
- Lesson 5: 14.15 – 14.55

We will expect the highest standards of behaviour during live on-line lessons. Any student who disrupts the learning of others will be blocked from accessing future lessons, and will be sanctioned in line with our behaviour policy when they return to school. All students should have their cameras and microphones turned off when they join the lesson, and these should remain turned off.

Work will also be uploaded to Google Classroom for those students who are unable to access the live lessons at the times they are scheduled.

The videos explaining how to access the live on-line lessons will be uploaded to our website so that parents/carers can view these to help their child access their lessons.

Key Worker and Vulnerable Students

Students in Years 7-10 who are identified as vulnerable, or are children of Key Workers, are being encouraged to attend school from Tuesday 4 January to Friday 8 January. Students who do attend school will be supervised and will access the live on-line lessons through their Google Classroom. They will not be taught by their teachers face to face.

If you think your child meets the criteria of being a vulnerable child, or you are a Key Worker, and you want your child to attend school in the first week of term please inform us of this by completing the Google Form through the link below. This form must be completed by 11.00am on Wednesday 23 December to allow us time to plan accordingly. We will contact parents/carers of these students to confirm arrangements on Monday 4 January.

<https://forms.gle/dYKtt7Latgoy6fUQ9>

In school testing

We have been informed that schools will be given access to additional COVID-19 testing from January 2021. The aim of this is to keep as many students and members of staff in school, therefore reducing disruption to learning. The Government's aim is to enable school staff to be tested weekly, as well as daily testing of both students and staff who are close contacts of a positive case, to avoid the need for self-isolation. We are still awaiting further details from the Department for Education in relation to this issue.

Once we have this further detail we will work closely with colleagues from Public Health and City of York Council to ensure that testing arrangements that are put in place are practical, achievable and have a positive impact on the possibility of transmission of COVID-19. The decisions we will make about conducting tests in school reflect the fact that York continues to be in Tier 2, and that we have low rates of COVID-19 in the local community. If this situation changes we will review the approach we are taking.

The tests that we have been asked to facilitate are Lateral Flow Tests. The results of these tests will be available within 30 minutes of the test being taken. These are for students who are asymptomatic. Students who are displaying symptoms of COVID-19 should follow NHS guidance and have a community based NHS test. They should follow the advice they are given once their test result is known.

We are awaiting further guidance on the use of tests in school, but at this stage we expect that these will be self-administered by students. Members of staff will be available to advise students on how to self-administer the tests, but will not carry out the tests themselves.

Students will only be asked to self-administer a test if we have consent for this to happen. If students have a positive test result they will be asked to go for a community based NHS test and follow national guidance about self-isolation until this test result is known.

Please note that any testing arrangements that are put in place are in addition to the standard operating procedures that we have introduced this term. These will continue next term. Testing in schools does not replace community based advice about social distancing, positive tests and self-isolation. Students who are identified as a contact of someone who tests positive in the community will continue to follow current NHS guidance and self-isolate for 10 days.

House Names

Following earlier information about changing the names of our School Houses, I am pleased to be able to tell you that the new names for the Houses are in the table below.

Old House Name	New House Name
Ali House	Oak House
Attenborough House	Willow House
Rowling House	Hazel House
Malala House	Aspen House

We will be doing further work with our students next term to complete the transfer to the new House names and will share further information with you about this then.

Changes to school systems

We have made some significant changes to our systems this year including moving many school events on-line. We have also made some changes to our Positive Behaviour systems including reducing the warnings issued to students who are disrupting lessons, before they are removed from the classroom, and also a quicker move into our inclusion room for those students who are disrupting a number of lessons.

This has been a very deliberate move to reduce disruption in lessons and allow students to learn without interruption. Members of staff are very pleased with the impact of these new systems as much more of their time is focused on teaching and learning. We will continue with this work next term, but will also give parents and carers an opportunity to give us feedback on these new systems. More information about how to provide this feedback will follow after the holiday period.

I do hope that the information above gives you the reassurance you need about the start of next term. The Department for Education guidance we are working to has been issued with very little notice, but we believe we have a sensible and achievable plan to allow us to continue to educate your children in a safe and learning focused environment. We will update you once we receive further guidance.

Best wishes for a healthy and happy festive period and New Year.

Dave Hewitt
Headteacher