



11<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

We hope that the weekend provided some much-needed respite from the trials of last week.

In this letter:

- Arrangements for in-school supervision
- Consent for asymptomatic Covid testing for students in school
- Remote Learning
- Broader student engagement
- And finally...

### **Arrangements for in-school supervision**

Many thanks to parents for considering carefully whether keyworker provision is needed in school. Of course, where it is necessary, we will seek to continue to provide this support, but we are working hard to juggle the combined demands of remote teaching and in-school supervision, and your support in this is greatly appreciated.

For those students who are receiving in-school supervision this week the IT room locations have changed as follows:

- Year 7 (surname A-J) E4
- Year 7 (surname K-Z) LB1 & 2
- Year 8 (surname A-L) MA8
- Year 8 (surname M-Z) IT2
- Year 9 Sixth Form Study Room (by Main Dining Hall)
- Year 10 IT7
- Year 11 The Learning Hub (for mocks and lessons)

Students do not need to wear school uniform, but attire should be appropriate for a day at school. Students should bring all equipment for timetabled daily lessons, including standard headphones (not Apple connector). We would also ask that students bring in a reading book.

### **Consent for asymptomatic Covid testing for students in school**

A reminder for all parents and carers to complete the survey below to indicate whether or not you consent to your son / daughter being tested on their return to school:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=wwKbEeKstEKPNgL1svSOdDuyvuXW7R5Co7hjpMtF9ORUMU1VTzRGMIRGUFQ3QU5GWjc2Sk9XUzBSVi4u>

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All accompanying information is available on the Covid section of the school website:  
<https://www.gordanoschool.org.uk/page/?title=COVID+19+Docs+%26amp%3B+FAQ&pid=69>

## **Remote Learning**

Many thanks for the very positive feedback regarding the first week of remote learning last week. We know that it won't always run entirely smoothly, but we are pleased to hear that, in the main, students seem to be settling into the routine really well. Teachers have reported how engaged the students have been, and how patient they have been where there have been a few early teething problems. Knowing our students, this does not surprise me in the least, but it's still lovely to hear!

We will be seeking to make phone calls to all parents in the coming couple of weeks to 'check in' and provide additional support if / as necessary. Please note that, if a member of staff is working from home then the phone call might come from a 'withheld number' - we know that people often avoid these calls, but please consider that it might be coming from a member of school staff phoning you for a 'check in'.

In particular, where remote learning is being accessed on small screens (e.g. phone) we have become aware that remote learning on Microsoft Teams can be accessed via certain games consoles (with the obvious need for careful monitoring at home!)

Guidance on how to make this happen is outlined in the following link:

<https://youtu.be/mfrSCEEDsmE>

### Xbox

1. Plug a keyboard into the XBox USB slot
2. Go to my games and apps
3. Find Microsoft Edge and select
4. Type in Microsoft TEAMS and then login to your account, using your username and password
5. You can then access all the online content for home learning and watch live sessions!
6. To move around you use the XBox control or plug in a mouse
7. Use a headset to interact, if you have one.

### PlayStation

1. Go to the library and find options for games and applications
2. Go into applications and you will find the internet browser; it's a WWW with dots around it
3. Type in Microsoft TEAMS and then login to your account, using your username and password
4. You can then access all the online content for home learning and watch live sessions!
5. Use a headset to interact, if you have one.

## **Broader student engagement**

We don't want to lose sight of some of the broader aims of education that we value so dearly at Gordano. Alongside their lessons it is so healthy for students to engage in a range of other activities, academic and beyond. A reminder that the Virtual School (<https://mrdbeesley.wixsite.com/gordanoschool>) has a large number of additional

resources for students in a range of areas and will continue to be updated in coming days and weeks.

One brilliant example of illustration in recent days has been Liam Noble, a Sixth Form student, who is running 70km in 7 days and has raised over £3,000 for the Mental Health Foundation to support men's mental health - obviously a very important cause at the moment. Really well done to Liam.

We know there are lots more students doing amazing things in the lockdown, and we'd love to share and celebrate more examples - if you'd be happy to do so, please share with Rachele Snowden, our Communications Officer ([rsnowden@gordanoschool.org.uk](mailto:rsnowden@gordanoschool.org.uk)).

**And finally...**

A huge thanks for all the messages of support. In particular, I have had two emails from parents in the last couple of days explaining how, in contrast to the Secretary of State's suggestion that parents unhappy with the remote provision from schools should complain to OFSTED, they had emailed them to say how positively they felt about their own child's experience. What a lovely demonstration of turning something rather dispiriting into something so hopeful and positive. My thanks to them both, and for everyone else's encouragement - it means so much to our staff to keep receiving it - it really does keep them going at a challenging time!

It was certainly quite a week last week - we had a screeching government U-turn on the closure of schools, the introduction of live 'remote learning' lessons across the school, a rapid re-plan of Year 11 mocks, setting up in-school supervision, some significant confusion regarding public vocational exams and setting up mass Covid testing in school. Sometimes it can feel daunting if you step back and think about the scale of the task ahead, but I have been incredibly proud of how our whole community has responded in such a 'can do' way. It reminds me of Francis of Assisi's quote: "Start by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible".

We are always going to remember this chapter in our lives. To say that we were part of a strong community who pulled together in the most challenging of times will, for many years to come, give us a great deal of pride.

With best wishes for a good week.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tom Inman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tom Inman  
Headteacher