



1st January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Wishing all of the Gordano community a very **Happy New Year** and every wish for a healthy and more positive 2021!

In this letter:

- Start of Term 3
- Students in school in the week commencing 4th January
- Remote Learning from 4th January
- Arrangements for Public Exams in January
- In-school asymptomatic Covid testing
- Offers to assist with asymptomatic testing
- Further information regarding the start of term and Parental Q&A session - Sun 3rd Jan 5pm

Start of Term 3

As explained in Wednesday's letter, the new arrangements for the start of term as are as follows:

- In the week beginning **Monday 4th January** only the children of critical workers and those needing additional support (including those who would struggle to access remote learning) will attend school. This will now include any Year 11 and 13 students who fall into this category*.
- All other students (apart from those above) will now 'learn from home' from Monday 4th January
- Public examinations due to be taken in January will continue as planned
- From **Monday 11th January** Year 11 and 13 are due to return to school, with other year-groups continuing to 'learn from home'. Year 11 mock exams will now start on Monday 11th January – a revised exam timetable will be shared early next week
- From **Monday 18th January** all students are due to return to school

* If you have not yet completed the survey (or are the parents of a child in Year 11 or 13 who fall into this category) and are requesting in-school supervision from Monday 4th January please now do this as a matter of urgency:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=wwKbEeKstEKPNgL1svSOdDuyvuXW7R5Co7hjpMtF9ORUQ1ZEN0tYSzcwSVg5NzZaNFZBS0RaTkhQMi4u>

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Students in School Week Commencing 4th Jan 2021 – Key Worker students and those requiring additional support

Students attending school during the week of 4th January should arrive for their normal start time. They are not required to wear school uniform, but should be dressed appropriately for school. The allocated rooms for each year-group will be listed on posters outside the Student Centre and other key locations.

Where parents/carers have indicated their child would like to purchase a packed lunch from school, please ensure there are sufficient funds on the Parent Pay account (unless they are eligible for Free School Meals). Students will be accessing their online lessons in IT rooms, so need to bring headphones that are compatible with the headphone port on a computer. They should bring all equipment required for their lessons that day. It would also be advisable to bring some additional study materials or a book.

If any student is unsure of what to do on arrival at school on Monday 4th January, they should go to the Student Centre, where assistance will be provided.

Remote Learning in the week commencing 4th January

All other students will access remote learning via Teams and Firefly, and will follow their four-week timetable as scheduled. This will include tutor time. We will issue more detailed guidance (including reminders about the use of Teams and Firefly, our expectations of students and how to access support if needed) in Sunday's communication to parents.

Arrangements for Public Exams in January

These will continue as planned. Students with public exams should arrive at school at least 20 minutes before the scheduled start time of the exam. They are not required to sign in at the Student Centre/Sixth Form, as they will be registered at the exam venue. Students should arrive at the exam venue at least 10 minutes before the start of the exam. Students will leave the school site once the exam has finished. If there is a change in exam venue (as in a few cases) there will be clear signage to indicate the change.

In-School Asymptomatic Covid Testing

We have now received further information regarding in-school testing. We will do all that we reasonably can to get our testing regime up and running as soon as we can, but it would be unwise to overpromise what we might achieve in the first week given so many unknowns and the scale of the operation in a school the size of Gordano. Once we have a greater understanding of the testing process and how it can be rolled out we will share more about our intended schedule for this.

In order to be ready to start this, we will require the consent of parents for any students under the age of 16. Those aged 16 or above are able to give their own consent. In all cases we will confirm with parents whether consent has been received.

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You can read more about how the government expects this programme to work:

<https://dfemedia.blog.gov.uk/2020/12/15/mass-testing-in-schools-your-questions-answered/>

A leaflet outlining the testing process is available here:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/946612/How to do your test COVID 19 instruction leaflet for schools.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/946612/How_to_do_your_test_COVID_19_instruction_leaflet_for_schools.pdf)

We will be sharing the electronic consent form early next week and would ask that you familiarise yourself with the above information so that you can respond on receipt of the link to the form. Students who are 16 or over will be set a Firefly task to complete the form for themselves.

Whilst, from a school perspective, we believe that this testing programme is the best way to protect our whole community and to reduce further impact on the education of students, it is important to stress that the decision to consent to testing (on return to school, and daily for seven days in the case of being established as a close contact) is for parents and students. Students will still be able to return to school alongside their peers if consent for testing is not given. Should these students be identified as a contact of a positive case they will be asked to self-isolate for ten days as per the self-isolation guidance.

Thank you for your patience whilst we set up our testing procedures. In the meantime, we will also be reviewing our risk assessment in time for the return of students, and we will continue to implement the safety measures we have been using in the autumn term.

Offers to assist with asymptomatic testing

A number of parents have kindly been in touch to offer their support to help the school run our asymptomatic testing procedures. The Lighthouse Schools Partnership team are co-ordinating the recruitment for these roles. To apply, please go to:

https://www.indeedjobs.com/lighthouse-schools-partnership-4da4ead/hl/en_GB?cpref=JXWAtnzf3XWjLOi4YeVNLqF8RN6a-Vzu3tqz_c913KE

Please download the application form (if hyperlink not working, please copy and paste the web address into your browser) and attach it to the online application through the 'Indeed Jobs' portal.

If you have any queries regarding the application process please email hr@lsp.org.uk. You will note the short timescale for initial applications (by Wed 6th January) to enable us to progress with making these appointments as soon as possible. Please do share this information with others in the community who may be willing to contribute, including any of our wonderful ex-Gordano students who may have capacity and be willing to support.

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As you will note, these are being advertised as paid roles, with some funding being made available from the government for this. However, we believe the true costs of running this process are likely to be greater than any funding received. Therefore, as a number have indicated, if any would be willing to carry out these roles in a part or fully voluntary capacity we would very much welcome the donation of part or all of the payment to the Gordano School Community Fund, which will enable us to offer further support to the students most affected by the pandemic. Please follow the same common application process (required for HR purposes) at this stage.

Further information regarding the start of term and Parental Q&A session – Sun 3rd Jan 5pm

We will be sending final communications regarding the start of term on Sunday and are offering a parental 'Q&A' session on Zoom to give parents the opportunity to seek any further clarification on arrangements for the new term. This will take place on Sunday 3rd January at 5pm, with the link below:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82165197482?pwd=bHNcVFNyWFZlWVUrnNjFJUGJhUy90Zz09>

Meeting ID: 821 6519 7482

Passcode: 864646

With very best wishes for the New Year.

Tom Inman
Headteacher

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