



Hillcrest School & Sixth Form Centre

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18th December 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

Teaching and Learning from 5th-8th January 2021: Year 7

I am sorry to be writing this letter now on the last day of term. You may have watched the announcement from the Department for Education last night and wonder what this means for your child in the first week back after the Christmas break. The government announced that Secondary schools will have a staggered start to the beginning of the next term with some students working remotely. Headteachers across the country received this information from BCC at the same time as the public.

The week beginning Monday 4th January 2021:

- Monday 4th January- Inset Day (Teacher Training Day)
- Students in Years 7, 8, 9 & 10 will be taught remotely with a mixture of pre-recorded lessons by Hillcrest Staff or the Oaks National Academy and tasks set on Show My Homework. Students should follow their normal timetable and I have outlined details further down this letter. Students will return to school on Monday 11th January 2021.
- Students in Years 11,12 & 13 will return to school as normal on Tuesday 5th January 2021.

I am truly sorry for any students who will miss face-to-face teaching during this week.

School open for limited vulnerable students and students of Keyworkers Parent/Carers

Schools are being asked to remain open for those students in Year 7 to 10 whose Parents/Carers are keyworkers and for students who are deemed vulnerable. Keyworkers have been defined by the government as those in the workforce who are not able to work from home and are essential to the running of the country. A list of these can be found on

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

However, we must emphasise that the government guidance also states that 'many parents working in these critical sectors may be able to ensure their child is kept at home. Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be'. Therefore, we are asking parents and carers to provide us with information about your situation and why you require school based childcare. **If you are a key worker, we are asking that you contact us by 10am on 4th January 2021 by emailing Enquiry@hillcrest.bham.sch.uk to let us know your circumstances and a member of staff will contact you.**

Testing of Covid-19 in Secondary Schools

Please also be aware that the government has announced this week that rapid testing of Covid-19 will be taking place in Secondary schools which means that staff and students will have access to mass testing in January. Specifically, this means that staff will be tested weekly (with results taking 30 minutes) and students, who are identified as close contacts of someone testing positive, can be tested

'Pupils' conduct is excellent. Around the School and in lessons, pupils are courteous and confident.'
'Strong ambition for improving outcomes for all pupils has led to good examination results.'
(Ofsted 2017)

daily for 7 consecutive days and remain in school, if they test negative. This testing will be optional, but those not consenting would be subject to the normal 10-day self-isolation period at home. We have not been provided with the full details of how this will work logistically and so will contact you in early January with details of how this will work within our school community.

During the 4 days that students are working at home, they should follow their normal timetable each day for **30 minutes per subject / per day** (see timings of the school day below).

All work will be set on Show my Homework.

If you feel that your child is getting too much work, or not enough work, then please contact your child's College Leader - Miss King.

During this period there will be no additional homework set. We do, however, recommend that your child reads for at least 20 minutes per day.

Students should follow their teacher's instructions on Show my Homework on how to complete and submit work.

School Timetable on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday:

Period 1 – 9:20am-10:20am

Period 2 – 10:20am-11:20am

Period 3 - 11:20am-12:20pm

Period 4 – LUNCH - 12:20pm – 1:20pm

Period 5 - 1:20pm-2:20pm

Period 6 – 2:20pm-3:20pm

Wednesday Timetable:

Period 1 - 9:20am-10:05am

Period 2 – 10:05am-10:50am

Period 3 - 10:50am-11:35am

Period 4 - LUNCH – 11:35am-12:20pm

Period 5 12:20pm-1:05pm

Period 6 1:05pm- 1:50pm

Mental Health and Well-being:

Kooth is an online mental well-being community that offers free, safe and anonymous support. They have created some fun and achievable activities to support young people's emotional health and wellbeing. <https://www.kooth.com/>

As your child will be using more online resources than usual, it is even more important that Parents and Carers and students themselves keep up to date with online safety guidance.

Please find below a link which gives information on some of the things to think about to make sure your child's experience online is safe and fun.

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/>

As always, please do not hesitate to contact school via email if you require any further support or guidance. **General enquiries: Enquiry@hillcrest.bham.sch.uk**

Safeguarding: If you have any other concerns that are affecting your child's emotional well-being, or are concerned about a Hillcrest student, please do not hesitate to contact a member of the safeguarding team (safeguarding@hillcrest.bham.sch.uk) for advice and support.

Free School Meals

If your child is entitled to free school meals, further details will be sent in January.

As always both teaching and support staff will continue to do their very best to support your child in these challenging circumstances, and we appreciate your continued support. We look forward to welcoming students back in school on Monday 11th January.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "J A Davies".

Ms J A Davies
Headteacher

