

18 December 2020

Dear Families,

Firstly, I hope that this finds you and your family well. It has been a term that I am sure we will all remember for a long time to come. We should take some satisfaction that we have made it to this point and look forward to a Winter break spending what time we can with those nearest to us.

If I said that this was the third draft of my letter that I have written this week, it will go some way to highlighting what has been thrown at our door at the 11th hour in the past few days.

A couple of days ago, the Department for Education (DfE) announced that there will be mass testing of staff and students in schools after the Christmas break. This will initially be for secondary schools, with the plan for primary schools to deliver this from February.

The full press release can be seen here <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/secondary-schools-and-colleges-to-get-weekly-coronavirus-testing> and a detailed Q&A page can be accessed here <https://dfemedia.blog.gov.uk/2020/12/15/mass-testing-in-schools-your-questions-answered/>

Testing will not be starting on 4 January as there will need to be a period of training and preparation after Christmas. As of today, we now know that the expectation will be that we will have testing up and running within the first week. Last night, the government released guidance stating that there will be a staggered start to the term with just exam year groups, vulnerable children and the children of critical workers (see below for definitions), in for the first week. It is disappointing that they have given us no time to plan for the first week back and get communication out to families, so I apologise if I am unable to give you all of the answers today. Please be aware that your child may be invited into the academy during the first week of term to receive the first of their Covid-19 tests.

Therefore, we have decided to take the opportunity given to us by DfE to make **Monday 4 January an INSET day**. This will be an additional INSET day to those already scheduled in our calendar. This will not impact Year 11 who have their PPE exams scheduled for Monday 4 January, they will still be expected to come in for 8.40 am.

I have summarised below other important points that you need to know and that I am able to share today:

Track and Trace/possible self-isolation:

If any child develops symptoms of COVID-19 up to midnight on Saturday 19 December and subsequently tests positive, you will need to inform the school in the usual way via the admin@themisbourne.co.uk email address so that we can complete our track and trace

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process back to the last day they were in school. This may mean that we contact you informing you that your child has to self-isolate. I very much hope that this is not the case but we are expected to continue to follow this procedure up to and including 23 December.

Start of term arrangements:

- Monday 4 January 2021, **INSET** day, no students to attend school **other than Year 11**.
- **Year 11 students** will commence their PPE examinations on Monday 4 January 2021. They will be free to return home once their exams have finished, or they can remain in school until 3.10 to take their usual transport home. The PPE timetables will follow in a separate communication later today.
- A normal bus service will run from Monday 4 January.
- Students in **Year 11** attend school every day.
- Students in **Year 13** will return to school Tuesday 5 January 2021.
- There will be provision for the **children of critical workers and vulnerable children** from Tuesday 5 January 2021. If you wish to book your child in to this provision, please complete the following [Microsoft form](#) before 2 January 2021. When in school these students will be given access to a computer so that they can participate with their online lessons alongside their classmates.
- All other **students in Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12** will remain at home for the week beginning Monday 4 January through to Friday 8 January inclusive and must log in to **online registration** each morning at 8.40 am, as well as **all lessons via Microsoft Teams** in accordance with their usual timetable. It is imperative that they log in on time and have 100% attendance to all their lessons. A register will be taken at the start of each lesson. There may be times during the lessons where students are asked to log out or to complete work away from the screen for a period of time, to help ensure that they are not spending six solid hours in front of the computer/tablet or phone.
- If your child is in receipt of **free school meals** and they are required to stay at home w/c 4 January, a food parcel will be available for collection on the afternoon of Monday 4 January. Families in receipt of free school meals will have received communication about this today.
- The **school café** will be operating a full service for all students attending school from Monday 4 – Friday 8 January.
- As we usually do, there will be a slight change to lesson times during the first two weeks of term to help accommodate the PPE exams. The new timings can be seen below and it is these times that will determine your child's timetable when they return to school or log in to lessons via Microsoft Teams in January 2021.
- All students will be back in school, on site, from Monday 11 January 2021.



Timings of the Day - January 2021								
		Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Periods	Gate Number	3	3	2	2	1	1	1
	Time of arrival	8.30	8.15	8.30	8.15	8.30	8.15	8.15
Tutor time, assembly	08.40 - 09.05	08.40 - 09.05	08.40 - 09.05	08.40 - 09.05	08.40 - 09.05	08.40 - 09.05	08.40 - 09.05	08.40 - 09.05
Movement	09.05 - 09.10	09.05 - 09.10	09.05 - 09.10	09.05 - 09.10	09.05 - 09.10	09.05 - 09.10	09.05 - 09.10	09.05 - 09.10
P1	09.10 - 10.10	P1 Lesson	P1 + Café break					
P2	10.10 - 10.40	P2 Lesson	P2 Lesson	Break	P2 Lesson	P2 Lesson	Extended Café Break	
P2	10.40 - 11.10	Cafe Break	Break	P2 Lesson	P2 Lesson	P2 Lesson	P2 Lesson	P2 Lesson
P2	11.10 - 11.40	P2 Lesson	P2 Lesson	P2 Lesson	Break	Cafe Break	P2 Lesson	P2 Lesson
P3	11.40 - 12.40	P3 Lesson	Additional Café/work space					
P4	12.40 - 13.10	P4 Lesson	P4 Lesson	Café Break	P4 Lesson	P4 Lesson	Break	
P4	13.10 - 13.40	Break	Cafe Break	P4 Lesson	P4 Lesson	P4 Lesson	P4 Lesson	P4 Lesson
P4	13.40 - 14.10	P4 Lesson	P4 Lesson	P4 Lesson	Café Break	Break	P4 Lesson	P4 Lesson
P5	14.10 - 15.05/10	P5 Lesson	P5 Lesson					

COVID-19 Testing:

Whilst there is still a lot we do not know about in terms of what we need to do to prepare for the in-school COVID testing, however we do know that we need to ask for your permission to test your child/ren. We will not be able to test students under the age of 16 without this. Can I please therefore ask that you complete [this consent form](#) to acknowledge your consent as soon as possible and before Tuesday 5 January 2021.

I would like to take this opportunity to once again thank you for your continued support, patience and understanding. We have been continually challenged this term, but I have been so proud and humbled by the way in which our community has pulled together.

Once I have more information, I will write to you again. This may need to be over the Christmas break, so please do look out for an email from The Misbourne.

In the meantime, I would like to wish you all a pleasant and restful break. Stay safe and I look forward to welcoming everyone back in the new year.

Yours faithfully,



Jo Meloni
Headteacher

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Definition of vulnerable children and critical workers

Vulnerable children and young people include those who:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children and young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued full-time attendance, this might include:
 - children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services or in the process of being referred to children's services
 - adopted children or children on a special guardianship order
 - those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')
 - those living in temporary accommodation
 - those who are young carers
 - those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example, due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)
 - care leavers
 - other children and young people at the provider and local authority's discretion including pupils who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health

Critical workers

Parents whose work is critical to the Covid-19 response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors outlined below:

- Health and social care
- Education and childcare
- Key public services
- Local and national government
- Food and other necessary goods
- Public safety and national security
- Transport
- Utilities, communication and financial services

Please [click here](#) to view the Government's full 'vulnerable children' and 'critical worker' definitions.

