



18th December 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

Throughout this pandemic circumstances have changed rapidly and I have endeavoured to keep you updated with the latest information. Yesterday afternoon the government made another announcement regards a 'staggered return' of pupils to school in January. I am sure you will share my frustration at the late notice of this significant announcement. However, I felt it was vital that I made you aware of the arrangements so you can plan ahead.

As you will be aware, originally all pupils were due to return to school on Tuesday 5th January 2021. As things now stand, all **Year 11 and 13 pupils will return to school on Tuesday 5th January** for face to face lessons as normal. **Year 7, 8, 9, 10 & 12 pupils will remain at home and access remote learning from Tuesday 5th January to Friday 8th January. These pupils will return to school on Monday 11th January.** We will be using Show My homework and Microsoft Teams to provide remote learning and further details will be sent to confirm arrangements on Monday 4th January 2021.

Any children whose parents are classed as 'critical workers' can notify us if they require their child to return to school from Tuesday 5th January 2021. At Stafford Manor High School we are always happy to support families of critical workers and frontline emergency services. If you fall into this category then please email us at c19@smhs.staffs.sch.uk with the following information:

1. Child's name and teaching group
2. Parents name and contact telephone number
3. Parents occupation and work contact details
4. Specific days the child is required to attend school.

We will be confirming arrangements with parents who contact us on Monday 4th January prior to term starting on Tuesday 5th January. Vulnerable children are also eligible to attend school during the first week of term and we will be in touch with individual families on Monday 4th January to establish whether they would like their child to access school through the week.

The Government has justified this 'staggered return' so that schools can prepare to offer rapid testing to staff and ultimately pupils. The aim of rapid testing is to identify asymptomatic cases to limit the spread of the virus and minimise the number of individuals who have to self-isolate from school. Although some details were released yesterday evening, we are awaiting further operational guidance to be published to establish exactly how schools are expected to implement this proposal. As we have done throughout the pandemic, please can I reassure you that we will be taking a calm and measured approach that will prioritise your child's safety and wellbeing. I can confirm that when we believe we are in a position to safely comply with all the guidance, we will communicate clearly with you prior to any testing system for pupils being introduced at school.

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I do hope that this update provides some clarity in advance of the start of the Christmas period and gives you the chance to make arrangements for the first week of term. I am hoping that we will not need to be in touch until Monday 4th January when we will confirm arrangements for the week ahead. However, should any further announcements be made then we will communicate with you as necessary.

Thank you for your continued understanding. Once again, I sincerely hope you have a peaceful Christmas and healthy, happy New Year. Stay safe and take care.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Lycett', written in a cursive style.

Mr R Lycett
Headteacher

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