

31 December 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Important Update: Delayed Start to Spring Term in January 2021

Unfortunately, we are in the position once again where we must contact you at very short notice about changes to arrangements for the start of the new term.

Yesterday, Wednesday 30 December, the Secretary of State for Education, Gavin Williamson, announced a revision to the national plans for how schools will manage the start of the Spring term to help further control the rapid spread of COVID-19. The new arrangements build on the twin principles of a staggered start to the Spring Term for secondary schools and the introduction of a new national strategy for mass testing in schools. However, some of the operational details of the plan have changed and parents are advised to read the rest of this note carefully.

Monday 4 January will now be an INSET Day to allow planning for mass testing, online lesson planning and laptop distribution. The Charter School East Dulwich will reopen to students according to the following schedule.

Year(s)	Schooling arrangements
Years 7, 8, 9 and 10	<p>From Tuesday, 5 January until Friday, 15 January students will learn online from home following their normal timetable. Most lessons will be live lessons via Google Classroom. Details of what to expect can be found in our Student Guide to Distance Learning.</p> <p>Week Commencing January 18</p> <p>Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12 are expected to return to school from Monday, 18 January but this is subject to updated government guidance over the next two weeks.</p>
Year 11	<p>From Tuesday, 5 January until Friday, 8 January students will learn online from home following their normal timetable. Most lessons will be live lessons via Google Classroom. Details of what to expect can be found in our Student Guide to Distance Learning.</p> <p>Students in Year 11 are expected to return to school in-person from Monday, 11 January but this is subject to updated government guidance.</p>

Chromebook loans

Students who have previously registered to receive a Chromebook in the event of a school closure can do so on Monday, 4 January. Chromebooks can be collected from the Jarvis Road entrance to the school reception between **9.30am and 10.30am**. It is recommended that parents rather than students collect Chromebooks, but we acknowledge that this may not be possible in all cases.

Vulnerable and Critical Workers' children

A small number of children can return to school on **Tuesday, 5 January** if their parents are critical workers (see full list of critical occupations [here](#)) or they have an EHCP or a social worker. These children will follow their usual timetable online, but under supervised conditions in school.

If your child has a **Social Worker or an EHCP**, we will contact you directly on Monday to confirm their arrangements. If you are a Critical Worker and you do not feel that your child can work safely and responsibly at home, please reserve a place in school by emailing office@chartereastdulwich.org.uk, using the subject heading **Critical Worker Provision**. Please note: students in Year 10 do not typically require on-site provision. We will confirm their place and answer any questions you may have by close of play on **Monday, 4 January** with a view to them being in school from **Tuesday 5 January**.

The Charter School East Dulwich plans to re-open fully to students in all year groups on Monday, 18 January but this is subject to further government guidance.

Free School Meal Provision

During this period, we will continue to provide shopping vouchers to those pupils who qualify for Free School Meals. If your situation has changed please let the school finance team know by emailing finance@tcset.org.uk.

Testing

As we plan for the full re-opening of the school, we are working to keep our staff and pupils as safe as possible. This will include the introduction of mass testing for those without coronavirus symptoms using new, quicker COVID-19 tests known as 'lateral flow tests'.

Along with the other protective measures we are taking, these tests will help staff and students to remain in school safely. Up to one third of people who have coronavirus experience no symptoms. By testing we will help to stop the virus spread and help to keep our school open as safely as possible. The test is voluntary, but we would encourage everyone to take it.

We will be testing all staff and children of critical workers and vulnerable children, who want to participate, from week commencing 4 January. The planning for this will take a few days and we will be sending out further information on the tests, how they will be carried out in school and consent forms early next week with a view to starting testing from **Wednesday, 6 January**.

Testing for other year groups will start as they return to school and more information will be shared around the timings of this next week.

Reporting positive cases while schools are closed

If your child tests positive for Covid-19 while the school is closed* what you need to do next depends on the type of swab test you had.

Rapid swab tests

If you had a positive rapid swab test (lateral flow test):

- get another type of test that is sent to a lab (PCR test) as soon as possible to confirm the result – follow any instructions you're given or get a test to check if you have coronavirus on GOV.UK
- you and anyone you live with should self-isolate until you get the result of the 2nd test

Other swab tests

If you had a positive swab test that was sent to a lab (PCR test):

- you do not need another test
- you and anyone you live with must self-isolate until you are no longer infectious (usually until 10 full days after your symptoms started or you had the test) You can find full details on how long to self-isolate for [here](#)
- you may be contacted by the NHS or your local council and asked for information to help the NHS alert your close contacts

*If your child has been attending school as part of the Critical worker/Vulnerable child group you must inform school as soon as they show any symptoms of possible COVID-19 and report a positive test as soon as it is received so that school can assist with close contact tracing.

While you are waiting for the test results you should follow the usual self-isolation rules which can be found [here](#)

Once again, I apologise that you are only receiving this information a few days before what would have been the normal start to the Spring Term. All our staff have been working hard to ensure that our online lessons are ready and build upon evidence of what works and your feedback on the remote teaching and learning provision last year. We will provide support for any pupils or parents who need help accessing the online lessons.

Our hope is that this unavoidable delay to the normal start of term will provide the best opportunity to suppress the growing numbers of infections and allow for the proper planning for mass testing which will mean less disruption to your child's education as we head into the New Year.

If you have any questions about this, please do get in touch.

Kind regards

Mr. A. Crossman
Headteacher