

18 December 2020

Dear Parents / Carers

I hope this letter finds you and your family well.

As we are now at the end of the first term of being back in school during the pandemic, I would like to start by thanking families for all your support. It is always appreciated that parents / carers work with us to overcome any challenges we may face and COVID has certainly dealt us a few of those.

Despite the differences to school life as a result of the COVID safety measures, pupils and staff have been determined to keep making progress and enjoy school life. At Roundhay, we often repeat the mantra **'whatever it takes'**, meaning we will do anything to ensure that our pupils get the best experience of school and the best opportunity for success. It is clear that our community has, over recent months, done this in 'bucket loads' and resilience (a key Roundhay value) has been tested and strengthened on a daily basis.

### Staggered start to the Spring Term 2021

To add to the difficulties we have already faced this year, the Government decided to inform us yesterday afternoon, the day before we break-up, of their intention that not all pupils should return to school during the first week back in January. This has meant that we are, once again, sharing information at short notice that we know will cause inconvenience and pose challenges for many of our families. We absolutely share your frustration and understand that, whilst online learning will take place, it is always better for pupils to be in school – particularly given the disruption already caused by lockdown and periods of isolation.

- There is an expectation that **all** Year 10, 11, 12 and 13 pupils will be in school from **Tuesday 5 January 2021**.
- **Monday 4 January 2021** – School will be closed to all pupils.
- Year 11, 12 and 13 pupils will follow a normal timetable during the first week back.
- Year 10 pupils will be in school for most of the first week back following a bespoke programme, and we will give full details when they return to school on **Tuesday 5 January**.

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- All remaining pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 will return to school on **Monday 11 January**. During the first week of the Spring Term, we ask that all pupils who are not in school access online learning within Microsoft Teams. They will be provided with the same experience in terms of online learning as any pupil who has had to self-isolate over the Autumn term.
- We will remain open to the children of critical workers in Years 7, 8 and 9 (as defined by UK Government) from **Tuesday 5 January**, as we did during the original lockdown earlier in the year. Details of which (and the type of evidence we will require) will be communicated in due course. Any pupils who are defined as vulnerable (including those children who are Looked After and who have an EHCP) will be contacted separately with bespoke arrangements for their return to school.

**The Government also made an announcement about potential COVID testing within school, but offered very limited information. We will, as ever, inform parents of information once we receive it.**

Throughout the year we have had to react to 'last minute' government announcements and had to respond swiftly by putting complex plans in place, consider huge implications to decisions and communicate to all pupils, staff and their families. This is often the basis of very limited, changing or contradictory information from the Government. As I have said many times, we really appreciate the support and understanding from the vast majority of our families, who recognize the huge challenges and that we are doing our very best to navigate unprecedented circumstances. We really do understand that this is incredibly frustrating for you at home, but ask that any anger or criticism is channeled to those who make the decisions, rather than school staff or leaders, who are duty bound to deliver Government policy or guidance.

## **Uniform**

A school holiday is a good opportunity to make sure your child has all the correct uniform and equipment for school. Thank you for your continued support in ensuring pupils look smart and are equipped for lessons. Please see the link below for essential uniform information:

<https://www.roundhayschool.org.uk/secondary-school/essential-information/uniform/>

We all wish you a very happy holiday and hope you get some quality time together as a family.

Yours faithfully



**Matthew Partington**  
Headteacher