

29<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope you and your families are keeping safe and well. As we approach the end of the fourth week of our remote learning programme, I am writing with some updates and reminders.

Yesterday, the Prime Minister announced that schools and colleges will not begin to re-open to all students until Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March at the earliest. He went on to say that, for this to happen “it depends on lots of things going right”. In an earlier announcement we were informed that we would receive two weeks’ notice of any re-opening date. I will keep you updated on this situation but, in the meantime, we will continue to deliver lessons remotely.

We have received many positive comments from parents and carers about the quality of remote learning we have provided during this closure period and the move to delivering most lessons live has, you have told us, improved the quality of our remote learning programme. The vast majority of students are engaging very well indeed with live lessons and this is very encouraging. This would not have been possible without your support or without the hard work of our teaching staff and I am grateful to everyone involved in making this a success to this point.

#### **Getting the most from remote learning**

As I would have expected, there are still areas of remote learning that we can, by working together, improve. I would be grateful if you would discuss the following with your child/ren:

- It is important that students attempt to access lessons on time. All lessons start with a “do now” activity which provides a recap of the previous lessons and sets the scene for the current lesson. I would like to reassure you, however, that teachers are aware that sometimes students may have technical problems when trying to access the lesson. This is not their fault and they will not be challenged over this. However, if your child is having frequent technical difficulties in accessing lessons on time, please contact us on [go4schools@springwellcc.org](mailto:go4schools@springwellcc.org) and we will be able to support you.
- In order to ensure that all learning resources are in one place, we are no longer putting materials on to Go4Schools. All resources will be in Microsoft Teams, in the files section of the team for the particular class. A video showing how to access Microsoft Teams is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/ybv3sr6e>
- While our policy is that every lesson is taught live, there will be occasions, such as when a teacher is ill or has to attend an appointment, when this is not possible. In this situation the teacher will provide work for students to do in this lesson. Students should check the posts section of their class’s Teams area and also look in the files section for any resources they may need.
- As teachers become more and more familiar with how Microsoft Teams works, they may begin to use some of the additional learning tools available. Our approach to remote learning has always been that it should be accessible on a smartphone. As more of the additional tools become used, it might be that students accessing lessons on smartphones

find it more and more difficult to engage with all aspects of the lesson. If you feel your child would benefit from having access to a laptop, or if access to the internet is sometimes difficult, we can probably help. Please contact us on [go4schools@springwellcc.org](mailto:go4schools@springwellcc.org) and we will see how we can support you.

- Please note that our policy is only to allow students in to a lesson if they are logged in to their college account. If they use a device which is logged in to your Office 365 account, or that of a sibling, they will appear in the lobby as a guest and will not be admitted. This is to ensure we do not admit any unknown people in to lesson as doing so would present a safeguarding risk to students in the lesson.
- While the vast majority of students are engaging fully with their remote learning, there are a small number who are not. If your child is not engaging at all, or if their engagement is very limited, please let us know and we will work with you to overcome any barriers to their engagement. We are gathering information from teachers on levels of engagement and attendance to their lessons and where concerns are highlighted, we will be in touch to see how we can support you.
- Engagement means more than being present in the live lesson. Students should be fully focussed on their learning and not doing other things, such as playing on games consoles or accessing different content on other devices. Teachers will judge engagement levels in a number of ways including by how much students interact through the chat function and by the extent to which they complete the work and assessments set.

### **Information and reminders**

On Wednesday next week, 3<sup>rd</sup> February, no live lessons will take place in period 5 (2-3pm). This is to allow teachers to complete attendance and engagement trackers for all of their classes and also to give students a break from screen time, which I appreciate they have had a lot of lately.

As part of our preparations for re-opening, I thought you would be interested and reassured to know that our lateral flow testing programme is up and running and we will be ready to test all students in their first week back. This will enable us to ask all positive cases, including those showing no symptoms, to self-isolate, thereby reducing the risk of further transmission. If you have not yet completed a consent form for this, it is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/ycqnuuya>.

Year 9 are due to receive their Teenage Booster (Tetanus, Diphtheria and Polio) & Men ACWY vaccination on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February. Due to the national lockdown, parents and carers will need to telephone the immunisation team on 01246 252953 to make an appointment. These will then be carried out in the college Sports Hall. This is the only opportunity to access the teenage booster as they are no longer offered by GP surgeries and as such completing the consent form and contacting the team for an appointment is essential.

Finally, a reminder that Term 3 finishes at 3pm on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> February. Friday 12<sup>th</sup> February is a teacher training day so there will not be any live lessons or work set on this day. Term 4 commences on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February.

Thank you again for your continued support and I wish you and your families the very best at this difficult time for us all.

Yours faithfully



Ian Wingfield  
Headteacher