



Monday 10<sup>th</sup> January to Friday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2022

## Headteachers' Blog

It seems a distant memory, however good manners determines that it is still appropriate to wish you all a happy new year for 2022. I hope your Christmas break was relaxing, safe and enjoyable.

I was delighted to be able to get school running as normally as possible very quickly by running a new system that delivered nearly 600 lateral flow tests within three hours, therefore negating any need to have a staggered start to school. Once again student behaviour during this process was exemplary.

We have returned to school with thankfully, few positive cases. Thank you to the parents who used our Covid email address over the holiday, it was helpful and reassuring to be able to keep a track on whether numbers were spiking or remaining low, as they did.

### Masks in Classrooms

Once again students have responded admirably to the request to wear masks in classrooms. None of us want this, but we recognise the need to reduce the chances of transmission of an airborne virus through mask wearing and increasing ventilation. I was talking to Professor Paul Linden from Cambridge University regarding his research through his Theoretical Physics team, and if we wear masks and utilise the excellent ventilation in the building, we significantly reduce the risk of transmission.

We have seen that a handful of parents are claiming that their child is exempt from wearing masks, and in some cases quoting some very dubious sources as to why masks are dangerous. To me, an individual is exempt from mask wearing if they have medical back up. The irony is that the call to wear masks is a request, it is not mandatory, so the use of words such as 'exempt' is unnecessary – ultimately it is a choice to engage in a public effort or not.

### Now some more detail about Covid Prevention from the Government;

#### Clarification on the use of face coverings in examinations and assessments

Following the temporary reintroduction of face coverings in classrooms, the [public health guidance to support exams](#) was updated on Sunday 2 January. This guidance sets out that we would not ordinarily expect candidates and invigilators to wear face coverings during exams and assessments, but only on arrival and departure. Both candidates and invigilators may wear face coverings if they wish to do so.

We recommend centres also follow this guidance for mock exams and other assessments taking place under exam conditions or as close to exam conditions as possible, including those taking place to gather evidence for Teacher Assessed Grades under the [guidance published by Ofqual](#) on Thursday 11 November. This includes circumstances where these assessments take place in classrooms.

For vocational and technical qualifications where the exam or assessment may require more interaction with an invigilator or others, such as a practical demonstration, centres have the flexibility to recommend that face coverings be worn if they deem this appropriate.

### **Clarification on the changes to the self-isolation period for individuals who test positive for COVID-19**

Since Wednesday 22 December, the 10-day self-isolation period for people who record a positive PCR test result for COVID-19 has been reduced to 7 days in most circumstances, unless you cannot test for any reason.

Individuals may now take LFT tests on day 6 and day 7 of their self-isolation period. Those who receive two negative test results are no longer required to complete 10 full days of self-isolation. The first test must be taken no earlier than day 6 of the self-isolation period and tests must be taken 24 hours apart. This also applies to children under 5, with LFT testing at parental or guardian discretion. If both these test results are negative, and you do not have a high temperature, you may end your self-isolation after the second negative test result and return to your education or childcare setting from day 7.

### **Testing for students after the holiday period**

As all settings are aware, we have asked that secondary school students undertake one on-site test, on return in January. This will help boost testing participation, identify positive cases, and reduce transmission after a period of social mixing during the holidays. Students should then be strongly encouraged to continue testing twice weekly at home and to [report all results to NHS Test and Trace](#) and to their setting.

Further education and higher education students, and staff in all education and childcare settings, should take one self-test at home either the evening or morning before they return in January, then continue to test twice weekly at home. Colleges should continue to make LFT tests available to students and staff who need them to enable them to test prior to, and at, the start of term.

Even if someone has tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 90 days, they are strongly encouraged to take part in LFT testing on-site through ATS or at home once they have completed their isolation period for their prior infection.

## ***On other matters...***

### **Parent Voice and FOSH**

FOSH (Friends of Stowmarket High) formed nearly four years ago and have been instrumental in helping fundraise for the benefit of all students – devices such as visualisers in classrooms have largely been funded by FOSH, for example. The team that have been so successful are tending to move on, so I am really keen to recruit a new team of parents who can build on this good work. If this is something you might be interested in, please contact me via email: [d.lee-allan@stowhigh.com](mailto:d.lee-allan@stowhigh.com) with the heading 'FOSH' and I will get straight back to you.

If you would like to contribute in a smaller way, on a shorter-term project, I would be keen to work with some parents gauging their responses to some key developments I am keen to pursue over the next few years. If this is something you might be interested in, email me with the title 'PV'.

Neither of these initiatives are heavy on time, but so useful for the school. Thank you in advance.

### **Exams**

Good luck to students sitting vocational examinations this week, and to the Art and Photography students undertaking their Pre exams.

Have a great week everyone – stay safe, but connected.

Mr Lee-Allan



## Going for Gold

Our Yr. 11 students have come back in a really positive mood after Christmas, and it feels like they are ready for the challenge that lies ahead.

The plan is still very much exams will go ahead, but that schools need to have a Plan B in the event of exams being called off again. Plan B involves us gathering evidence from formal assessments that include PREs (Pre-public Exams) to form TAGs (Teacher Assessed Grades). Our Yr. 11 students sat their first set of PREs last term, the results of which will be used should we need to provide TAGs.



The next set of PREs take place this term beginning on the 14<sup>th</sup> of February and these results will also be used to generate TAGs if the exams should not go ahead.

### For Year 11 parents, here are some Key dates and events that taking place this half-term:

11 <sup>th</sup> January	Year 11 Sciences Tripod Evening Year 11 Progress Checks published
13 <sup>th</sup> January	Year 11 Tripod Evening – all non-Science subjects
18 <sup>th</sup> January	Year 11 Sciences Tripod Evening
20 <sup>th</sup> January	Parents/Carers GCSE Success Evening – due to Covid measures, this will now take place remotely. Details to follow shortly
14 <sup>th</sup> February	Year 11 PREs begin

This term is all about **Going for Gold** for our Yr. 11 students and I am pleased to already be able to inform you that we have lots of support in place to support our students. Mr. West, who is responsible for all the Yr. 11 support and intervention that is taking place, will send a separate document with information about all the success sessions that are being provided, but I would just like to highlight a couple of new developments:

### The Gold Zone

From today, the LRC (Learning Resource Centre) is available for all Yr. 11 students to use, during break, lunch or after school. It is quiet area that is available for revision and schoolwork, and it will also be housed with past exam papers and mark schemes for every subject. Light refreshments will be available each afternoon for those students using the Gold Zone after school. What a fantastic resource to have! Please encourage your child to make full use of this facility.

## English Success Sessions

Every Monday at 6.30pm, Mrs. Arnold (Director of English) will be streaming live into your homes! She has invited all Yr. 11 students to join her on Monday for the first Success Session which will be remote through Teams. We are trialling this approach because we believe a 6.30pm time slot allows students to recharge, have something to eat and to do the things that they want to do at the end of school before then doing the Success Session.

Again, another great opportunity for our Yr11s to Go for Gold! Again, please encourage your children to attend these sessions.

There is lots going on, and each Newsletter we will update you more information.

If you have any queries or wish to share any ideas with us, then please do not hesitate to contact us:

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GCSE Success Sessions – Year 11 Pre-2 Preparation					
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>Lunch</b>	<p>Res Mats - Project</p> <p>Catch up (JHA)</p> <p>Engineering – Unit 1 &amp; 2 Catch Up (ADU)</p> <p>Graphic Design – Unit 1 &amp; 2 Catch up / PRE-Prep (ADU)</p> <p>Business – Week A</p> <p>ART – Component 1: Coursework (GPA)</p> <p>Week B – Chemistry 2.06 (BLE)</p> <p>Week A – Physics 2.05 (CLU)</p>	<p>GCSE PE DWI</p> <p>Res Mats - Project</p> <p>Catch up (JHA)</p> <p>Engineering – Unit 1 &amp; 2 Catch Up (ADU)</p> <p>Graphic Design – Unit 1 &amp; 2 Catch up / PRE-Prep (ADU)</p> <p>Music coursework (MBS)</p> <p>Week A – Biology 2.03 (ADE)</p> <p>ART – Component 1: Coursework (GPA)</p>	<p>Res Mats - Project Catch up (JHA)</p> <p>Engineering – Unit 1 &amp; 2 Catch Up (ADU)</p> <p>Graphic Design – Unit 1 &amp; 2 Catch up / PRE-Prep (ADU)</p> <p>Drama – Comp 2 Exam Prep (NRE)</p> <p>ART – Component 1: Coursework (GPA)</p> <p>Week B – Biology 2.02 (DPR)</p> <p>Week A – Business (MDI)</p>	<p>GCSE PE DWI</p> <p>Res Mats - Project</p> <p>Catch up (JHA)</p> <p>Engineering – Unit 1 &amp; 2 Catch Up (ADU)</p> <p>Graphic Design – Unit 1 &amp; 2 Catch up / PRE-Prep (ADU)</p> <p>Music coursework (MBS)</p> <p>ART – Component 1: Coursework (GPA)</p>	<p>Res Mats - Project</p> <p>Catch up (JHA)</p> <p>Engineering – Unit 1 &amp; 2 Catch Up (ADU)</p> <p>Graphic Design – Unit 1 &amp; 2 Catch up / PRE-Prep (ADU)</p> <p>Week B – Business (MDI)</p> <p>ART – Component 1: Coursework (GPA)</p> <p>Week A – Chemistry 2.07 (CMU)</p> <p>Week B – Physics 2.04 (RYF)</p>

<b>After School</b>	<p>ART – Component 1: Coursework (GPA)</p> <p>Hospitality and Catering – Unit 2 and revision for Jan Exam (LBR)</p>	<p><b>SCIENCE - Past paper practice 2.06</b></p> <p>Engineering – Unit 1 &amp; 2 Catch Up (ADU)</p> <p>Graphic Design – Unit 1 &amp; 2 Catch up / PRE-Prep (ADU)</p> <p>ART – Component 1: Coursework (GPA)</p>	<p>Res Mats - Project Catch up (JHA)</p> <p>Engineering – Unit 1 &amp; 2 Catch Up (ADU)</p> <p>Graphic Design – Unit 1 &amp; 2 Catch up / PRE-Prep (ADU)</p> <p>IT – Coursework Catchup (AVW)</p> <p>Computer Science (ACO)</p> <p>Drama – Comp 2 Exam Prep (NRE)</p> <p>ART – Component 1: Coursework (GPA)</p> <p>GERMAN (JST)</p> <p>History (AHE)</p>	<p><b>MATHS</b></p> <p>Res Mats - Project</p> <p>Catch up (JHA)</p> <p>Engineering – Unit 1 &amp; 2 Catch Up (ADU)</p> <p>Graphic Design – Unit 1 &amp; 2 Catch up / PRE-Prep (ADU)</p> <p>History – Skills/Knowledge -</p> <p>Week A = AHE</p> <p>Week B = SSM</p> <p>Geography (JTH)</p> <p>ART – Component 1: Coursework (GPA)</p> <p>History (SSM)</p>	<p>HSC 1-1 and group coursework catch up</p> <p>Week B only (LWE)</p> <p>ART – Component 1: Coursework (GPA)</p>
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## Dates for your Calendar

Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> January – Yr. 11 Science Tripod Evening 1

Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> January – Yr. 11 All Other Subjects Tripod Evening

Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> January – Yr. 11 Science Tripod Evening 2

Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> January - Parents/Carers GCSE Success Evening – due to Covid measures, this will now take place remotely. Details to follow shortly

Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> February – Yr. 7 Frankenstein – Theatre Trip, B.S.E.

Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> February – GCSE Options Evening – Details to follow shortly

Monday 14<sup>th</sup> February – Yr. 11 Pre's Start



## Useful Contact Information:

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To report a student absence please call **01449 613541** and select option: 1