

10th December 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

Update letter for families – 10th December

On Wednesday 8 December, the Prime Minister announced the implementation of [Plan B of the COVID-19 Response: Autumn and Winter Plan](#), to reduce pressure on the NHS. Plan B sets out a number of additional measures across society to control transmission of COVID-19, which are already in place within schools.

The Government is clear on the critical importance of not disrupting the education of children and young people and the Government will prioritise keeping all schools open. By way of a summary, the main points are below:

- Attendance - School attendance remains mandatory;
- Face coverings - Face coverings should be worn by pupils and students in year 7 and above, staff and visitors in communal areas and on school transport, unless exempt.
- Isolation - All individuals who have been identified as a close contact of a suspected or confirmed case of the Omicron variant of COVID-19, irrespective of vaccination status and age, will continue to be required to self-isolate and asked to book a PCR test. The Government plans to introduce Daily Contact Testing as soon as possible as an alternative to self-isolation for contacts of positive Omicron cases who are fully vaccinated or under the age of 18 years and 6 months.
- Testing - Please encourage your child(ren) to test twice a week and to record their results on [TestRegister](#) as well as the [NHS Results Website](#)
- January return – All students are expected to take an LFD test prior to their return on 5th January. *We have asked families if they prefer for their child(ren) to be tested on-site test during the w/c 5th January, as this will determine whether we need to implement staggered starts for year groups and increase our onsite testing capacity. If you have not done so already, please complete this [survey](#) by **no later than Sunday 12th December 2021**. Testing in school helps to boost participation and will help reduce transmission after a period of mixing over the holidays.*

Please read on for essential updates.

Last Day of Term 17th December

We are very excited to be holding a Christmas Market on the last day of term. The Year 9 Student Leadership Team are coordinating the event with the help of Miss Dowd, and students from each year group are organising stalls to raise money for charity. Students will finish at the earlier time of 1pm.

In addition, Friday 17th December will also be a non-uniform day for students as a reward for reducing the number of *tells* received over the last two weeks. We are asking students to pay £1 to wear non-uniform and the Year 10 student voice group are deciding on which charity this money will go to. We ask that students dress appropriately and avoid wearing any revealing clothing.

Break and Lunchtime

We have had to make some changes to our break and lunchtime arrangements in response to the new Covid variant. This means that more students will spend their break and lunchtimes outside. We are encouraging students to make sure they have a warm coat in school so that they are comfortable during their break times. Please remember that we do not allow hoodies as an extra layer in school. We plan to rotate the break and lunchtime indoor areas so that no year group will be disadvantaged by the restrictions that we have had to put in place owing to Covid.

Reporting incidents on the bus

We expect the same high standards of behaviour from students on buses as we do within the school. When we receive reports of poor behaviour on the bus, we investigate and issue sanctions in line with our school policy. If your child experiences any problems on the bus then please report them to us using the [link](#) on our website.

Reading Initiative – from Ms Waldron

Starting in January 2022, a new reading initiative will be launched during tutor time for years 7-9. Students will be reading texts from across the subject areas to enrich their cultural understanding and to encourage wider reading. These texts support knowledge beyond the curriculum, and tutors will guide students through the reading to help bring the works to life. If you are interested in supporting the wider reading initiative at home this Christmas, here is a suggested gift or borrowing guide for the season:

- *The Christmas Pig* - J.K. Rowling
- *A Christmas Carol* - Charles Dickens
- *Little Women* - Louisa May Alcott
- *The Dark is Rising* - Susan Cooper
- *Letters from Father Christmas* - JRR Tolkien
- *The Polar Express* - Chris Van Allsburg
- *The Hogfather* - Terry Pratchett
- *The Night Before Christmas* - Clement Clarke Moore
- *The Box of Delights* - John Masefield
- *Silent Night: The Story of the WWI Christmas Truce* - Stanley Weintraub
- *The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle* - Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

Teaching and Learning update

Staff are reviewing how we give feedback in lessons, and how we help students to understand their learning. We are experimenting with different ways to do this, such as using reflection sheets. Please do ask your son(s)/ daughter(s) about their experiences of reflection activities to date. Students have been working very hard this term and have been answering the many questions put to them. We are focusing next term on how teachers use questions in class to develop challenge, so you will be hearing more about this after Christmas.

Assessment

- Unfortunately, owing to the new Covid restrictions, we have moved the Year 11 Results Release Event to period 5 on Thursday. This means that students will collect their results without parents present. They will receive an envelope containing their current grades, these grades represent what the students have achieved in the November Trials.
- To support Year 11 parents who have queries about student progress, we will email a link to a Results Release Form, this will enable families to contact the school with requests for information about the Trial results. We will respond to all requests in the New Year.
- The Year 11 Progress Reports will be published on the Sims app on 17.12.21. The Progress Reports will contain; the current grade, which is a measure of attainment and could be used to generate Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs); the Professional Predictions, for use in college applications and the Teacher Set Target grades generated in September. Progress made since the end of Year 10 trials will be measured.
- For help with the Sims app please contact: simssupport@abbeycollege.cambs.sch.uk

Headteacher Commendations

The following students have received a Headteacher Commendation this week. They will receive 10 spirit points and special postcard home.

Student	Recognised for
Lauren S	<i>Passion: For continued excellence in her gymnastics outside of school and for winning trophies!</i>
Rosie L	<i>Demonstrating passion through her spokesperson role during the Villers Park Leadership Event.</i>
Olivia M	<i>Humility: Excellent leadership - planning and leading a Yoga lesson in PE</i>
Ellie T	<i>Humility: Excellent leadership - planning and leading a Yoga lesson in PE</i>
Arun T	<i>Dogged determination to achieve his bronze spirit award. He's always so passionate about his work and will do anything to assist anyone to get those points!</i>
Lauren F	<i>Intuition: Organising an excellent wellbeing event for Y11 students after their trial exams.</i>
Hettie D	<i>Intuition: Organising an excellent wellbeing event for Y11 students after their trial exams.</i>
Amy S	<i>Intuition: Organising an excellent wellbeing event for Y11 students after their trial exams.</i>
Molly N	<i>Intuition: Organising an excellent wellbeing event for Y11 students after their trial exams.</i>

If you would like to nominate someone for an Abbey College Spirit Award then please follow this [link](#).

Parent Governor Recruitment

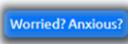
We will be recruiting for a new parent governor next term and we are especially keen to hear from anyone with experience in charring committees. If you would like any further information or to talk to a current governor, please contact katie.dodsley@abbeycollege.cambs.sch.uk.

Parent Forum Questions

Two similar questions were posed in last week's survey around the Canteen Menu and food provision. On the 11th January 2022, our Catering Manager, Chris will be answering questions from the Parent Forum about the catering provision. One parent asked if we could place the canteen menus on our website, and this has been completed. Please see the [Catering Section](#) of our website to access the menus.

If you would like to join the forum, please contact Katie Dodsley: parentforum@abbeycollege.cambs.sch.uk.

Feeling worried or anxious?

Please use the dedicated button  on our website to confidentially raise concerns or to request support, including:

- Peer Mediation, to help students resolve any friendship issues they may have;
- Reporting a concern about the bus;
- Reporting unkindness or bullying;
- Ask for support with anxiety.

Please continue to take good care of yourselves.

Yours faithfully



Andy Christoforou
Headteacher

Parent Diary Dates 2021-22

<i>Date</i>	<i>Activity/Event</i>
<i>Friday 17th December</i>	<i>Last day of term – Christmas Market – school closes 1pm</i>
2022	
<i>Tuesday 4th January</i>	<i>Inset Day – staff only in school</i>
<i>Wednesday 5th January</i>	<i>Students return 8:30am</i>
<i>Tuesday 25th January</i>	<i>Year 9 STEM day</i>
<i>Wednesday 26th January</i>	<i>Year 13 UCAS deadline</i>
<i>Thursday 27th January</i>	<i>Year 9 virtual parents' evening 4:30-7:30pm</i>
<i>Monday 14th-Friday 18th February</i>	<i>Half term – school closed</i>
<i>Monday 21st February</i>	<i>Inset Day – staff only in school</i>
<i>Tuesday 22nd February</i>	<i>Students return 8:30am</i>