



SUMMERHILL SCHOOL

29 January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

PARENTS UPDATE – 29 January 2021

I would like to start by thanking everyone for their support during this difficult and trying time. We are all facing different battles as lockdown continues and it is important that we continue to support each other in every way possible. I must offer significant thanks to the staff during this time for all of their work above and beyond the normal school day. I am aware that many are working in the early hours or very late at night to ensure the highest quality of pre-recorded lessons and blended learning.

Remote Learning Survey

As most schools across the country are doing, we are constantly reviewing our remote/blended provision and making changes as necessary and as part of this we will be issuing a survey to all students and parents next week.

Google Classroom

Staff are increasingly using Google Classroom as an easy way to share resources with students. Please remind students that they must log into RM Unify/Google Classroom with their school email address and password to access this. If students log into RM Unify first, there is a direct link to Google Classroom. Students cannot use their own personal google account as it will reject their login.

Mental Health Week – 1st – 7th February 2021

The theme of this year's Children's Mental Health Week is 'Express Yourself.' On Wednesday 3 February 2021 we are celebrating this by collapsing our usual timetable and inviting students to take part in other activities which ensure their minds stay healthy and positive. We're calling it 'Wicked Wellbeing Wednesday' (WWW without the internet!) and there will be a list of activities for mindfulness and well-being which students can select sent out via Satchel One early next week. Students are encouraged to send in pictures of themselves creating/making/taking part to comms@summerhill.dudley.sch.uk

Summerhill Steps Challenge – 1st – 7th February 2021

During Mental Health Week we would like all students & staff to log the steps they complete each day. We will then collectively see how far as a school we can walk from Kingswinford in one week. A link to record steps each day will be available on Weduc and our Facebook Page.

Summerhill Live Exercise Classes

Mr Mortelmans leads these for the whole school community (parents and carers are more than welcome to participate!) and they take place on Wednesdays at 3pm – here's the YouTube link: <https://youtu.be/O3kB10cxFy0>

Form Times

We have introduced an online weekly 'Form Time' for all students with their form tutor. This is a really important part of maintaining contact and allowing students to touch base each week. They take place, during normal form/break time as follows: Monday – Year 7, Tuesday – Year 8, Wednesday – Year 9**, Thursday – Year 10 and Friday – Year 11.

Invitation links are sent via Satchel One and it is an expectation that all students will join.

**Please note that due to Wellbeing Wednesday next week (3 February) Y9 from time will take place on Thursday 4 February.

Regular Contact

All students will receive a regular phone call home to check on their welfare. For students who join form time, these calls will usually take place fortnightly. For those who don't join form time, calls will remain weekly. Please use these calls to raise any concerns and we will ensure they are addressed as soon as possible.

Parents' Evenings

Online parents' evenings will continue as already planned throughout the course of the year. Dates will be circulated in due course along with the appointment booking system. We held the first part of our Year 11 evening yesterday and received a fantastic response from parents.

Key Worker/Vulnerable Students

The school remains open for the children of critical workers (who have no alternative arrangements) and vulnerable children. If your child falls into a specific 'vulnerable' group we will contact you directly to ask if you would like them to attend school.

If you are a critical worker who is working from home, or if you have alternative childcare available – such as a childcare bubble – **you should keep your child away from school in accordance with the clear government guidance issued.** The school is open **only** for the children of keyworkers **who have to attend work** and have **no genuine alternative arrangements**. Please note that the government guidance is clearly – STAY AT HOME, PROTECT THE NHS, SAVE LIVES.

We are tightening up the booking for critical worker places and parents will need to complete an online form with key information from next week, to ensure that the criteria for critical workers is clearly met. We will be requesting proof of employers and critical worker status. Places will now have to be booked for the following fortnight. A copy of the link to complete the form will be sent to those parents already accessing the provision as well as a post on Weduc. We are now unable to cater for last minute arrangements as the staffing rota has to be produced in plenty of time.

Covid Testing in Schools

We continue to undertake Lateral Flow Covid testing and have completed over 350 tests on key worker students and staff so far. All tests undertaken to date are negative. The programme will continue to be rolled out for anyone in the building over the next few weeks. A mass testing programme will then be planned for when all other students return to school, as required by the Government.

Staff Contact

I am asking staff to ensure that they maintain a sensible work life balance during this time and only respond to emails during their normal working hours. **There is a separate Covid email address which SHOULD be used to report cases. Please see the information later in this letter.**

Year 11

The government guidance on teacher assessments in place of examinations is still to be received. The public consultation closes today. We are only aware of exactly the same information as was shared in the press and media earlier this week. We will certainly look to calendar a second round of internal exams later in the year. This means that students still have the opportunity to work towards formal assessment points alongside teacher assessments. At present, the government have given us no indication, whatsoever, of the process but I assure you that we will work as hard as we can to ensure that students get the grades they rightfully deserve.

Notifying the School of positive Covid test results

If your child receives a positive Covid test result at any time then please let us know immediately, even whilst school is closed, using the email address covid@summerhill.dudley.sch.uk

If you do have to notify the school of a positive test result, we need to have a series of questions answered. These will include the date your child was last in school, the date the test was taken, the first date that your child experienced Covid, any other positive cases or symptoms in the household and any contact with other families or individuals. This information will be sent to Public Health England.

I'm sure you will have seen on the news that Boris Johnson is hoping to re-open schools from Monday 8th March 2021. This is the earliest possible date but in the current situation, further delays cannot be ruled out.

Thank you again for your on-going support

Yours sincerely

Martyn Palfreyman
Headteacher