



Nailsea School

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10th December 2021

Dear Parents/carers

I hope you have managed to read this term's newsletter, sent home yesterday. It was certainly a bumper edition reflecting the huge number of opportunities students have responded to and the great levels of success they have achieved over the last seven weeks. Today has been the first fundraising event for our House charities and it was great to see a little Christmas cheer, (although sometimes the same amount of taste!) with the non-uniform jumper choices made.

Covid Update

As you are aware the Prime Minister has announced additional measures this week to respond to the rising Omicron numbers. With regards the process in school for the remainder of term, nothing changes and we are still adhering to the following:

- Parents continue to use the c19@nailseaschool email address to **report any issues related to Covid-19**. It would be very helpful if this initial email included the name and tutor group of the child and the date when symptoms started, if any. Once confirmed information related to the end of isolation is also very helpful. This will ensure that our records are updated internally and classroom teachers can be informed.
- Students to **continue twice weekly home testing** to pick up asymptomatic cases
- **Students should not come to school if suffering from symptoms of COVID-19** (high temperature, loss of taste or smell, continuous cough). If your child does show symptoms please take them for a PCR test as per NHS guidelines.
- **Masks** to be worn on home-to-school transport and those who travel to school by public transport, in corridors and communal indoor areas at breaktime and lunchtime when not eating. They can be worn in classes if students wish.
- **Internal social areas divided up per year group at break time and lunchtime** will continue during the period of amber escalation.
- **Use of hand gel, ventilation and enhanced cleaning measures.**

End of term 2 and start of term 3

As mentioned last week the school will end for the Christmas break at 1pm on Friday 17th December. Tuesday 4th January is an INSET day, with staff only expected on site.

Please find attached further details of the staggered start to term 3, so that testing can take place as requested by the government. These additional documents are

- A timetable showing when students will be tested and the remote learning offered
- A Guide to using Teams for online learning – as an introduction or as a reminder.

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Students in years 7 – 13 will be receiving a mixture of remote learning (work set on ClassCharts completed independently) and Live Lessons accessed through Microsoft teams. I would suggest that parents and students take some time, ahead of the new term in familiarising themselves with the way Teams is accessed.

If any family feels as if they will have difficulty in accessing on line lessons and learning for the first three days of term 3 please contact Mrs Rutty on SRutty@nailseaschool.com

Parents and students will be contacted separately regarding their test time. Please note : anyone who has tested positive for Covid in the last 90 days is not required to do the LFT testing on return in January. They should return on the date stipulated without needing to take a test before returning

Vaping

In the last week staff from the precinct informed us that they believed Nailsea students were both vaping and swearing before and after school. I can confirm that having visited Crown Glass three times this week, the young people that were involved in this behaviour were not from Nailsea School.

However, we are aware that certain types of vapes are being marketed towards children due to their bright colours and flavours, such as bubble gum.

E-cigarettes do contain nicotine, which is an addictive substance and their sale to anyone under 18 is illegal. Please note, at first glance, these vapes can look at first glance like a highlighter pen and could go unnoticed.

Any student caught in possession of a vape/e-cigarette will be dealt with firmly. As a school, our first priority is to keep students safe. Thanks for your support.

Uniform reminder

With term finishing next week, the holiday is a key time for ensuring students return in January in the correct uniform.

There are a few key reminders that I would like to highlight:

- PE uniform, including the blue PE jumper, should only be worn on days when students have PE. Jumpers will be confiscated as needed.
- Hats and hoods should not be worn/raised in the school building.
- Given the increased ventilation, coats are now permitted in the building during social times. They are expected to be removed in lessons.
- Hoodies/non uniform jumpers are not permitted on site. The only exception is for Year 11 students who will receive their hoodies in due course.

Ambition

I would like to congratulate all of year 11 and 13 students given they are now coming to the end of their mock exam period. I know the experience may not have been one they would all be looking forward to, but this has certainly been an important part of the learning process ahead of the summer where they will, hopefully, sit their actual papers.



Though the intention is for all students to be awarded their grades via 'normal' examinations next summer, the Department of Education has briefed schools on contingency plans. If exams do not go ahead, it is likely grades will be awarded via Teacher Assessed Grades. Over the course of the next 6 months a portfolio of work will be built up, to use as evidence, if needed. Every one of these certainly counts towards the preparation.

When I have more information about changes to exams next summer, I will share this with you. Schools have been told to expect further announcements in February.

#AimHigh



Respect

Our ABSolute Extended Tutor Time programme is a key part of our curriculum, where students discuss wider issues, including respecting each other and ourselves. To compliment the work that has been completed this term on Thursday 16th December we are pleased to welcome Cally Rhodes (a Welsh singer-songwriter) to Nailsea. She will be spending period 1 with year 9 and period 2 with year 8. As well performing live, she will also speak to the students about careers, bullying and body image and answer any questions they may have.

#BePositive



Kindness

There is no doubt that this term is a tiring one, both for students and staff. I would like to acknowledge the huge efforts of the staff in covering for absent colleagues over the last few weeks.

There have been a number of days this week where, for various reasons, 15 staff or more have needed covering as they have not been in work. With schools struggling to secure supply staff, in order to keep the school operational existing staff are being used in their non teaching/management time. Despite the implications of this for these staff, all have done so without question, reflecting a huge understanding of the big picture and embodying the core ethos of our school.

On another personal note, I would also want to express my thanks to the Barista from Costa in Crown Glass who brought me out a hot chocolate during one of my precinct duties this week. It was quite chilly and certainly made my morning!

#BeKind



Pride

As mentioned earlier, with the school site being in the midst of the local community, I can sometimes be contacted about concerns from members of the public regarding anti-social behaviour. In this week's case, following my visit to the precinct, on this occasion such a perception was unfounded.

There are also occasions when I am contacted regarding the fantastic way students behave and this always makes me very proud of our young people. Please see the comments I received this week:

'I am a parent of one of your pupils and drop my son near school every day. I just want to feed back how courteous some of the Nailsea pupils are when they cross the roads and zebra-crossing outside of the school. A good number of them (especially older pupils) raise a hand in thanks to the cars, or nod their appreciation as we stop to let them cross.

It makes all the difference to people like me – facing a long work day ahead and having that day started positively by a simple smile and thanks from a Nailsea pupil.

Please do let them know the positive impact that such seemingly minor acts of courtesy can have. It also reflects very well on the school as a whole'

#BeProud



Community

Many thanks to the group of parents that attended the parent voice group this week with myself and Gavin Ball, Chief Executive of the Wessex Trust. It was incredibly useful to be able to hear from parents, representing students in years 7-13, who passed on their views of current good practice and some suggestions on what can be improved further. I will be producing a summary in my final letter of term next week of the points discussed and the action already planned to be taken.

#TeamNailsea

Finally...

regular readers of this letter will know that as well as being an historian, I am very partial to musical theatre. I was gutted to have to miss Mrs Nicholson's Hamilton Lunchtime Lecture this term, for example. This weekend I am venturing back to the theatre for the first time in a very long time, to watch 'Six'. I take the point that a musical about the wives of Henry VIII is not the most Christmassy of productions, but I am ridiculously excited, nevertheless.

What ever you are doing this weekend, enjoy!

Take care and be kind

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dee Elliott".

Mrs Dee Elliott
Head teacher