

6<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents / Carers,

The recent announcement by the Prime Minister of another national lockdown will be difficult news for many of us. This is in response to a rapid escalation in COVID-19 cases and a new variant of the virus. During this period, schools have been told that the vast majority of students will need to undertake online learning at home. We have been advised that this situation is expected to last until at least February half term. Government guidance on this can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-lockdown-stay-at-home>

### **Remote Learning**

Much has moved on in remote learning since the first lockdown. Our planned curriculum will be maintained during this period of lockdown and all students will be expected to follow their normal timetable and engage fully in their live lessons, for the full school day. You have already received detailed information and tutorials about how to access our remote learning provision from Mr Brown and Mr Wilkinson. Our expectations of remote learning over the next few weeks, including useful help videos and key contacts, can be found here:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/16PFfriLXz8l0uSwCoX1YCTfJhTBus2ijKqQHAWGbY14/edit>

### **Engagement and Attendance**

Engagement with learning and attendance to live lessons will be tracked through attendance registers. We will take action where we see a lack of participation and make contact with you and the student to identify any barriers that may be preventing full engagement. Students are also reminded that we maintain the same high expectations for conduct and behaviour during online learning as we would in school. Staff will continue to award recognition points and Star Cards for student engagement and effort. If you have any issues with remote learning please contact the class teacher or Head of Year, in the first instance via their school email. Similarly, if you have technical issues or lack of access to ICT please contact Mr Wilkinson.

### **Critical worker/ Vulnerable Children Provision in School**

If you are a critical worker then you will have already made arrangements for your child to be supervised in school to complete their remote learning. Please only utilise this if you have absolutely no other alternative. **From Thursday 6th January students must enter the school site through the main student reception, on Grammar School Lane.**

Students who are attending this provision in school will access the live lessons delivered by their subject teacher. They will be in small groups within their year group pod, supervised by a member of our support staff and their Head of Year. They will need to bring with them the expected equipment which includes a pair of headphones and chromebook if they have one. As an additional safety measure, students and staff will wear face coverings in these rooms. Good ventilation and frequent hand sanitising is in place. Students are expected to observe social distancing at all times.



## Examinations 2021

The Prime Minister also announced that the summer exams for 2021 would be replaced with alternative arrangements – **please note that he did not say that they will be cancelled entirely**. The details of this have not yet been made available to schools but it is likely that there will be an element of formal assessment which will inform any process for schools generating grades. Similarly, engagement and progress in remote learning are likely to be significant contributing factors in how grades are produced in the summer. In the light of this uncertainty we will postpone the Y11 and Y13 Trial Exams until after February half-term. **As we are not yet in a position to be able to communicate clear plans for 2021 examinations we have also decided to postpone the Y11 parents' meeting which was due to take place this evening at 5pm.** This event will now take place on Wednesday 20th January 2021 at 5pm. Mr Wilkinson will contact Y11 parents next week to share the details and invitation for this online meeting.

It is important that every student understands that we will continue to deliver the curriculum and prepare the students for whatever type of assessment that will be used to award qualifications. **The school year has not ended, and lessons will continue.** As soon as we know more about the months ahead, we will update you. Whatever happens, students must continue to engage in their learning, remain positive and remember that everything they have learned, and the skills they have developed, are still very important and will be needed to access the next stage in their lives. Our message to students is: **do not give up or disengage from learning.**

## Y13 Vocational Exams - January 2021

We are awaiting further confirmation today about the arrangements for these examinations. We will notify all students concerned about these arrangements later today.

## Y9 Options Process

Before Christmas, Mr Wilkinson sent details of our Y9 Online Options process which will begin with an online introduction meeting for students and parents on Thursday 14th January at 6pm. To enable planning for the next academic year, it is very important that this process happens along the same timeline as planned. This is an important process as we need to ensure students select ambitious and appropriate courses that will serve them best for their futures. The online introduction meeting is the beginning of a 6 week process during which students will receive detailed guidance and about the choices on offer and individual support where needed. Further details will be sent shortly in a separate letter from Mr Wilkinson to all Y9 families.

Finally, I would like to thank you for everything that you will do in the coming weeks in supporting your child with their education and learning. It is truly appreciated by all Northallerton School & Sixth Form College staff. We continue to be committed to making education through lockdown as successful for all as possible. We will be in contact regularly over the next few days to keep you updated on everything you need to know.



If you have any questions or concerns then please do not hesitate to contact us via the following:

For general enquiries: [enquiries@northallertonschool.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@northallertonschool.org.uk)

For issues accessing webex lessons please contact Mr Brown: [brown.c@northallertonschool.org.uk](mailto:brown.c@northallertonschool.org.uk)

For general IT / technical issues: [itsupport@northallertonschool.org.uk](mailto:itsupport@northallertonschool.org.uk)

For vulnerable / key worker children provision and any covid related issues:

[response@northallertonschool.org.uk](mailto:response@northallertonschool.org.uk)

Take care and stay safe.

Yours sincerely

**Mrs V.E. Rahn**  
Head of School