

9 February 2021

Dear Parents

First of all, thank you for your support this term. Speaking to many parents, and the feedback from students, “lockdown 2” seems to have been far harder than “lockdown 1” due in part by the poor weather and the feeling of containment. I hope we shall be welcoming back the vast majority of students, if not all, early next term. There are just a few items for information over half term.

Year 7 Parents’ Evening

We are moving the date of this event to **Tuesday 2 March 2021**, it was originally scheduled for Thursday 25 February 2021. This is solely because the SchoolCloud platform we use for virtual parents’ evenings has less traffic on Tuesdays than Thursdays. Most schools nationally use Thursday as the date of their parent meetings and this demand led to disruption of the Year 11 event. We hope the change in date will mitigate against disruption. Year 7 parents will be receiving invites to the parents’ evening shortly.

BT Broadband offer

BT have a scheme for low income families offering reduced line rental and broadband. The link is attached. I make no recommendation of the service but wanted to highlight its availability.

<https://www.bt.com/help/landline/getting-set-up/help-people-with-impairments-or-with-particular-needs/how-do-i-find-out-more-about-bt-basic->

On site Covid testing

Vulnerable and key worker students will receive a second round of Lateral Flow Covid Tests after half term. When all other students return to school, we intend to conduct tests to all those who have provided consent on their first and third day back. At the moment, the expectation is to conduct tests only on return to school, not weekly and this is what we intend to do. Weekly tests would be very disruptive to the normal teaching and learning. We intend to repeat the process after the Easter holidays.

Library and Stationery Minibus

The first round of the library and stationery minibus took place last Friday and the intention, weather permitting, will be to continue this service every Friday during the school term while students are remote learning. We shall be out again this Friday (12 February) at the times and places listed below:

- 11.20am – 11.50am ASDA Swanley
- 12.10pm -12.25pm Borough Green Village Hall
- 12.35pm – 12.50pm Seal Recreation Ground
- 1.05pm - 1.20pm Tesco Riverhead
- 1.40pm - 1.55pm NUGENT Shopping Centre, Cray Avenue
- 2.10pm - 2.25pm The Rose and Crown, Green St Green

Snow closures

I would rather have all students in school and the site has been open for those who are eligible to attend, but sometimes we cannot get what we want. I apologise if the closure of the school site has been disruptive this week but the weather has meant that I cannot justify the risk to staff and students. Covid has at least meant that the capacity to provide educational provision remotely on snow days is vastly improved. However, please allow students to enjoy the snow safely if that is their wish. It is a rare treat/curse and the biggest issue that has come from "Lockdown 2" is the effect on mental health of the students; the snow may provide some welcome light relief, however short-lived it may be.

Mental Health

On the school social media channels there are links to a large variety of mental health sites which provide support and strategies for students. I would like to state, once again, that the fixation in the media on a lost generation in education is not evidenced by the progress that students made after the first lockdown. I am confident that the progress of all of our students will be robust after their return to school. I urge all parents and students to enjoy the half term and have a break from sitting at a screen for endless hours.

Best wishes



David Collins
Headteacher