

Weekly News Update Friday 7 January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

Happy New Year and welcome to the first weekly update of 2022. We hope you all had a restful Christmas break and that students feel refreshed and ready to settle back into their learning. Unfortunately, we have had to make the difficult decision to postpone the school production until the summer term. The entire school and community desperately wish for our students to have this wonderful experience and we fully recognise all the hard work, creativity, and dedication the students have shown since rehearsals started in October. We have tried to find a way to make this work and are committed to ensuring that the production does take place but feel that in the current situation, disrupted rehearsal time and reduced audience capacity would compromise the quality of the performance and the experience for everyone. For these reasons, we have decided to postpone the performance until July, after the Year 11 GCSE exams, when we hope things will have returned to more normality.

Our scheduled Year 9 Options Evening and Year 9 Parents' Evenings (see dates below) will be online events and therefore early closures on these dates will not be necessary. We are continuing to run sports fixtures which are outside or in large, well-ventilated spaces and we are asking students to do regular lateral flow tests, including on the days of the fixtures.

Covid Updates

Students have become very adept at using the lateral flow tests and thank you for sending your children in at the correct time for their in person testing this week. The government advice is for continued twice weekly testing and students have been provided with further tests to take home this week.

There will be a significant change in government guidance next week. From 11 January in England, anyone who receives a positive lateral flow (LFD) test results for coronavirus (COVID-19) will be required to self-isolate immediately and won't be required to take a confirmatory PCR test. This is a temporary measure while COVID-19 rates remain high across the UK. Anyone who receives a positive LFD test result should report their result on GOV.UK. Please also contact COVID@dorothy-stringer.co.uk to inform us.

You must self-isolate if you get a positive test result, even if you have had a recent negative lateral flow test – these rules have not changed. Individuals may now take LFD tests on Day 6 and Day 7 of their self-isolation period, 24 hours apart. If both these test results are negative, and you do not have a high temperature, you may end your self-isolation after the second negative test result and return to school from Day 8.

School Laptops during Isolation

If your child would struggle to access our remote learning programme at home, please contact our Assistant Headteacher, Loretta Lloyd at lyd@dorothy-stringer.co.uk. Please don't wait until students are required to isolate before asking for IT support. We will do our best to support you in advance, so there is no interruption to learning.

Information on the vaccination programme for 12–15-year-olds

Around half of 12–15-year-olds have now received at least one COVID-19 vaccination nationwide. Young people in this age group in England are now being offered a second dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine at a minimum of 12 weeks from the first dose, following advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI).

Parents can book vaccinations for their child, if aged 12 or over, through the NHS booking system. Vaccination for this group will also continue to be carried out by the school age immunisation service (SAIS) and when we have further details from the SAIS team, we will let you know.

Enrichment Week reminder

Enrichment Week will take place between 11–15 July 2022 and was launched with all students in Years 7–9 via a virtual assembly and through tutor time at the end of last term. Some activities offered are limited to certain year groups and others are open to all three year groups. These details are in the booklet, along with information on cost and any equipment needed by students:

Enrichment Booklet: https://issuu.com/dorothystinger/docs/enrichment_week_2022

All students will need to return their completed Student Choice Form to their form tutor by **Friday 21 January 2022**. You can use this link to download a copy of the form: Enrichment Week Choice Form or if you need a hard copy of this form, please ask your child to collect one from the Nexus. We will then allocate students to the activities and inform them of their selection in March. We will not ask for any payment until full details have been confirmed.

Root Word of the Week – Pan, meaning ‘all’ or ‘every’

- Panorama - an unbroken view of the whole region surrounding an observer.
- Pandemic - (of a disease) prevalent over a whole country or the world.
- Pandemonium - wild and unrestrained disorder or uproar.

Key Dates:

Year 9 Options Evening (live zoom and videos) – Thursday 20 January 2022

Year 9 Parents’ Evening (remote) – Thursday 27 January 2022

Half Term – Monday 14 February - Friday 18 February 2022

Key Dates for 2021/2022 are on our website: https://public.dorothy-stringer.co.uk/ds/pages/key_dates.aspx

Take care and stay safe.

Matt Hillier