

18th December 2020



Dear Parent/Carer

Returning to Oasis Academy Lord's Hill in January

I hope you are well and have enjoyed a positive start to the Christmas holidays with your families. I am writing to you with an update following an announcement made by the Department for Education (DfE) on Thursday 17th December. I apologise for the late notification of these changes. I am sharing this with you as quickly as I can.

In summary, the arrangements are now as follows:

- We already have an INSET day in place for all students on 4th January. No students should attend school on this day.
- All students in Year 11 must return to school as planned from Tuesday 5th January.
- Students in Year 7-10 whose parents are critical workers or who are determined by the DfE as 'vulnerable' are to attend school as planned from Tuesday 5th January. I include the government guidance on the classification of critical workers and vulnerable children with this letter.
- Other students in Years 7-10 should not attend school from Tuesday 5th to Friday 8th January. These students must attend their timetabled lessons, but these will be delivered remotely via Microsoft Teams, with students accessing their learning from home. These students must return to the Academy on Monday 11th January.

The DfE has explained that the purpose of this change is to allow time to set up mass COVID-19 testing for students within secondary schools. The reason for more testing is that it will mean that it will be possible to identify those with the virus without symptoms. This will mean that they can self-isolate, minimising the spread of the virus and the disruption caused. The goal is to keep as many students as possible in school beyond the start of term.

You can read the latest guidance from the DfE by searching 'gov.uk return in January' or by clicking here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-and-childcare-settings-return-in-january-2021/schools-and-childcare-settings-return-in-january-2021>

Principal - Rob Forder

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Coronavirus testing within school

I am afraid I do not yet know the details about how the planned COVID-19 testing within schools will be carried out, nor when this will be ready at our Academy. As we learn more from the DfE we will develop our local plan, and then share these arrangements with you before your child is asked to receive a test.

What do I do now?

- If your child has a positive case for COVID-19 between Friday 18th December and Wednesday 23rd December, please inform us as soon as possible by emailing COVIDtest@oasislordshill.org so that we can inform close contacts. In your email you should include your child's name, the date of their positive test and a contact telephone number.
- If your child has a positive test for COVID-19 between 24th December and 4th January, you must inform Public Health England. This will be done automatically if your child receives a test from a testing centre, and you can also do this by using the NHS App. We also require you to let us know by emailing COVIDtest@oasislordshill.org.
- If you are a critical worker as outlined in the DfE criteria provided in the guidance with this letter, we strongly encourage you to send your children to school from January 5th at their usual bubble start time. I would be extremely grateful if parents who are critical workers could complete the following form by 12 noon on 29th December 2020 to allow us to plan for your child's return:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/8XLCHLY>
- If your child is classified as 'vulnerable', we will contact you on or before 4th January to invite your child to school from 5th January at their normal bubble start time. Please note that 'vulnerable' children include those who do not have an IT device or access to the internet at home.

Remote Home Learning

If your child is being asked to access remote learning via Microsoft Teams from Tuesday 5th to Friday 8th January, you will find comprehensive guidance on how to do this on our Academy website, using the following link.

<https://www.oasisacademylordshill.org/learning/home-learning>

All students have had comprehensive training in the use of Microsoft Teams, and their teachers will invite them to their lessons so they will know which lessons to attend and which times.

We look forward to seeing all Year 11 and all other eligible students at the Academy on Tuesday 5th January, and all other students online. We will be together again as a whole school, in our usual bubbles and implementing all the usual COVID-19 prevention procedures, on Monday 11th January.

Once again, please be assured that as I receive more information from the DfE regarding mass COVID-19 testing, I will plan arrangements at the Academy. I will be in touch with you prior to your child being asked to receive a test.

Thank you as always for your support of the Academy and the staff who are doing all they can to help keep everyone safe and provide your children with an exceptional education. I am so proud of everyone.

I wish you all a peaceful and healthy Christmas break, and my very best wishes for 2021.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Forder', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mr Rob Forder
Principal

Government guidance : Critical workers and vulnerable children who can access schools or educational settings - 3rd December 2020

Government guidance on who are critical workers, and which children are deemed vulnerable is provided below, and also on the government's website.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

Vulnerable children and young people include those who:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children and young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued full-time attendance, this might include:
 - children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services
 - adopted children, those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')
 - those living in temporary accommodation, those who are young carers
 - those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)
 - others at the provider and local authority's discretion

Critical workers

Parents whose work is critical to the coronavirus (COVID-19) response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors outlined in the following sections.

Health and social care

This includes, but is not limited to, doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, care workers, and other frontline health and social care staff including volunteers; the support and specialist staff required to maintain the UK's health and social care sector; those working as part of the health and social care supply chain, including producers and distributors of medicines and medical and personal protective equipment.

Education and childcare

- childcare
- support and teaching staff
- social workers
- specialist education professionals who must remain active during the coronavirus (COVID-19) response to deliver this approach

Key public services

- those essential to the running of the justice system
- religious staff
- charities and workers delivering key frontline services
- those responsible for the management of the deceased

- journalists and broadcasters who are providing public service broadcasting

Local and national government

- those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the coronavirus (COVID-19) response
- or delivering essential public services, such as the payment of benefits, including in government agencies and arms length bodies

Food and other necessary goods, those involved in food

- production
- processing
- distribution
- sale and delivery
- as well as those essential to the provision of other key goods (for example hygienic and veterinary medicines)

Public safety and national security, including:

- police and support staff
- Ministry of Defence civilians
- contractor and armed forces personnel (those critical to the delivery of key defence and national security outputs and essential to the response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak)
- fire and rescue service employees (including support staff)
- National Crime Agency staff
- those maintaining border security, prison and probation staff and other national security roles, including those overseas

Transport

This includes those who will keep the air, water, road and rail passenger and freight transport modes operating during the coronavirus (COVID-19) response, including those working on transport systems through which supply chains pass.

Utilities, communication and financial services

- staff needed for essential financial services provision (including but not limited to workers in banks, building societies and financial market infrastructure)
- the oil, gas, electricity and water sectors (including sewerage)
- information technology and data infrastructure sector and primary industry supplies to continue during the coronavirus (COVID-19) response
- key staff working in the civil nuclear, chemicals, telecommunications (including but not limited to network operations, field engineering, call centre staff, IT and data infrastructure, 999 and 111 critical services)
- postal services and delivery
- payments providers
- waste disposal sectors