

2nd December 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re: update on the school's re-opening/important dates

Following a review meeting on Monday with Sandwell Health Protection Team, Public Health England and Sandwell Local Authority we have modelled our staff absence into next week following the recent confirmed Covid cases which led to the school being closed to students from Wednesday 25th November.

I am pleased to start welcoming students back in a phased approach from next Monday as per details below:

- **Monday 7th December: Years 11 and 13 only** to arrive at 8.30am
- **Tuesday 8th December: Years 10, 11, 12 and 13 only** to arrive at 8.30am
- **Wednesday 9th December: open to ALL year groups**, students to arrive at usual set times (Y7-9: 8.40am, Y10-13: 8.25am).

Our initial focus will be on the re-connection for students and to ensure a smooth transition back into face to face teaching. There will also be a strong focus on some of the guideline restrictions of tier 3.

For all students not in school on either Monday or Tuesday, they should continue to use Microsoft Teams and our blended learning approach that has been developed.

It will be great to see students returning once again as nothing can match face to face teaching.

End of term

In line with government policy, the school will remain open up to Friday 18th December though students will leave early on the last day of term (see details below), as per school's tradition.

- Leaving time on 18/12/20 for Years 7, 8 and 9: 12.15pm through their usual exits
- Leaving time on 18/12/20 for Years 10, 11, 12 and 13: 12.30pm through their usual exits.

Students on Free Schools Meals may either spend their allowance or collect a grab bag during morning break that day.

The school will re-open to students on Wednesday 6th January 2021 at the usual time (to allow for staff training to take place on 4 & 5/01/21).

I have taken the opportunity to provide you with full details of our end of term dates for the remainder of this academic year as well as our emergency closure procedure should this be necessary this winter.

As you know, we only close the school as a last resort as we wish to maintain a normal education as much as possible but the likelihood of year group closures or even whole school closures is still a possibility as a result of the new guidance from Sandwell Public Health or possible poor weather conditions this winter – please note that remote learning will resume should the school close again due to Covid or bad weather.

Christmas holiday

We understand that people will want to be with their friends and family over Christmas, particularly after an incredibly difficult year and will be allowed to make a Christmas bubble with them as per new rules from the government. Please continue to take personal responsibility to limit the spread of the virus during the holiday, this will help ensure that the festive period is as safe as possible and avoid further confirmed Covid cases in school in the New Year. This includes applying social distancing measures, ensuring indoor spaces get as much fresh air as possible, washing your hands regularly and for 20 seconds, and following rules on self-isolation if you develop symptoms or test positive for coronavirus.

If your child test positive for Covid during the Christmas holiday

Please inform us by emailing the following address covidresults@phoenix.sandwell.sch.uk **as soon as possible** with the following information:

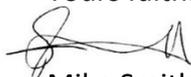
- Student name
- Year group
- When they developed symptoms
- Any siblings at school.
- What were the symptoms
- Date of the test
- When they were last in school
- How do they travel to school: walking/car/bus - who do they travel to school with.

This will allow us to identify their close contacts and inform them that they need to self-isolate for 14 days as a result (despite being on holiday).

In what has been the most unbelievable of years may I take this opportunity to thank you for all of your support with the difficult decisions around self-isolating and closing to students we have had to make. Let's hope 2021 brings a swift end to the pandemic and the constraints on families, communities and school.

Finally, on behalf of the staff and governors, I would like to extend our very best wishes for the festive season and a happy and healthy New Year.

Yours faithfully,



Mike Smith
Head teacher

Spring term 2021

- **Inset days:** Monday 4 and Tuesday 5 January 2021 (school closed to students)
- Students return to school: Wednesday 6 January
- Half term holiday: Monday 15 February to Friday 19 February
- Term ends: Thursday 1 April
- Easter holiday: Friday 2 April to Friday 16 April

Summer term 2021

- Term starts: Monday 19 April
- Bank holiday: Monday 3 May (no students in school)
- Half term holiday: Monday 31 May to Friday 4 June
- Term ends: Wednesday 21 July
- Summer holiday: From Thursday 22 July

+ 1 other training day to be confirmed (as a replacement for Friday 27th November)

Procedures for school closure due to bad weather & emergencies

It is our policy to remain open unless we are forced to close because there is a risk to the health, safety and welfare of staff and students. The Head teacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors is responsible for making the decision to close the school due to inclement weather conditions in the immediate locality.

How parents will be notified that the school will be closed

Closure due to poor weather conditions are very rare and will be avoided where possible. In some cases, we may decide to open later than normal to allow time for the site to be made safe, this will be announced on the radio, the school's website and Twitter. There is no need for parents/carers to contact the school to check whether or not the school is open. **Unless announced on the radio and school's website, the school will be open.**

School Closure Procedures:

If the school is to be closed, there will be an announcement on the following radio stations to state this:

Radio WM

Free Radio Birmingham (formerly BRMB)

Heart FM/Capital FM

Free Radio Black Country (formerly Beacon Radio)

Additionally this announcement will be posted on the school website, www.aspirebelievesucceed.com and on Twitter @PhoenixCollHQ (details will also be posted on the Local Authority website following notification by the school to the LA).

a. If the school is closed BEFORE the start of school Day

Please refer to the procedures outlined above.

b. If the school closes DURING the school Day

Should the weather turn worse during a school day, students will only be sent home if there are satisfactory arrangements for them to return safely. Should any parent/carer wish to make any alternative arrangements for their child, they should put these in writing to the Head teacher.

The school will inform West Midlands Travel and individual transport providers to ensure that adequate arrangements are in place for students to return home safely.

While we understand parental concerns, it would be helpful if parents/carers were aware of the difficulty for an office potentially responding to literally hundreds of calls. I would ask that parents/carers do not telephone the school at these times unless there is an emergency.

PLEASE NOTE

During any school closure, students at home should access remote learning which is available on the school's website (under the 'Home learning' tab), through Microsoft Teams.