



# THE BILLERICAY SCHOOL

## A MATHS & COMPUTING COLLEGE

School Road, Billericay, Essex, CM12 9LH

Tel 01277 655191 Email [info@billericayschool.com](mailto:info@billericayschool.com) [www.billericayschool.com](http://www.billericayschool.com)

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1 January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

Happy New Year to you all and I hope that you were able to enjoy Christmas with your family.

### **Re: Parent/Carer Update 1 January 2021**

On 30 December, the Secretary of State announced some changes to the start of the spring term, applying a version of the previously published contingency framework for education and childcare settings.

This was followed by the publication of some contingency framework implementation guidance, and an email to all schools and colleges the same day.

The key points from these documents and messages that apply to us are as follows:

#### **Secondary schools and colleges**

The previously announced staggered start has now been revised to “allow more time so that every school and college is able to fully roll out mass testing of all pupils and students”.

I appreciate that these new arrangements will have an impact on some parents and carers, particularly those that work during school hours. I can confirm that the school will remain open for children of critical workers and for students with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or who have a social worker, where they can attend and are not required to self-isolate. Please note that they will be supervised to access the remote learning being provided by a subject teacher via google classroom and will not receive direct tuition.

If you are a critical frontline worker, we would ask for you to carefully consider whether you do have an essential need for your child to remain in the school setting for the first two weeks of term. If home-learning is possible for your child it will help contribute to drive cases down in the community. If you have no alternative but to send your child into school to be supervised, please complete the form which can be found on our website:

<http://www.billericayschool.com/coronavirus-update/keyworker-information>

If you are a parent/carers of a child with an EHCP or a social worker, we will contact you to discuss the provision for your child.



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Headteacher Mr Ahson Mohammed, B.Ed. (Hons)

Deputy Headteachers: Mrs Shirley Smears, B.Ed. (Hons), Mr Patrick Berry, BA (Hons), Mrs Charlotte Berry, BA (Hons)

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The timeline for the return to school will now be as follows:

- **In the week beginning 4 January:**
  - Only vulnerable children and children of key workers as set out above should be on site from 5 January.
  - Remote education should be provided for exam year groups (11 and 13) and *“to all other years as resources permit”*. We will endeavour to provide as full a provision to other year groups as possible but it is very likely that a significant number of staff will be involved in the development or administration of the mass testing programme and this will limit their ability to also set specific remote learning via google classroom. In these instances, students should also use the Access to Home Learning area of the school website (and their specific year group Google Classroom) to access suitable learning tasks.
  - The school *“will prepare to test as many staff and students as possible”*. When we are ready to start testing, years 11 and 13 and any students in other years due to sit a public examination from 11 January will be a priority and our intention is to implement this by the middle of the week. We aim to schedule specific days for each year group, thereafter, and will contact you accordingly. Lateral flow testing will require two tests to be taken within 3 to 5 days of each other.
  - All students returning to school during this first week, are advised to book a PCR test before the start of term via the Government website <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test> . Please select the option for community testing (unless your child is showing symptoms of Covid-19).
  
- **In the week beginning 11 January:**
  - Vulnerable children, children of key workers as set out above and students in Year 11 should be on site. Year 13 students should attend only for any public or PPE examinations and should leave the site once these have been completed.
  - Remote education should be provided for all other students.
  - Any scheduled vocational exams should go ahead as planned.
  - Testing *“will begin in earnest”*, prioritising staff, students on site and exam cohorts if these have scheduled public examinations.
  
- **In the week beginning 18 January:**
  - All students should be on site.
  - Any scheduled vocational exams should go ahead as planned.

You will clearly see that this is a change from the guidance received before we broke up for the Christmas break. However, we endeavour to provide high quality learning at the earliest opportunity and believe that we will be able to provide remote learning for the majority of students from Monday 4 January as planned.

Therefore, all students are to work from home from Tuesday 5 January, including years 11 and 13. Lessons will continue via google classroom. Internal PPE examinations will be rescheduled to commence week beginning 11 January and students informed by email and through google classroom.

External examinations will go ahead as previously advised and students are expected to attend at the allocated times to carry out these examinations. Students in years 9, 10 or 12 that are scheduled to sit a public examination will also be prioritised for testing and will be contacted with their time slot.

### Community support for the mass testing programme

We are still awaiting guidance, the necessary training, equipment and resources to carry out the mass testing programme. However, it is clear, having carried out our initial internal risk assessment, that in order for the school to develop the personnel capacity required to undertake testing on such a large scale, we are going to require support from the wider school/parental community.

Our initial assessment suggests that at least 20 volunteers will be needed to assist us in overseeing the tests being carried out. If you feel that you are able to volunteer some time over the forthcoming weeks, no clinical experience is needed. Please can we ask that you make contact with the school, ideally via email to [info@billericayschool.com](mailto:info@billericayschool.com) using the heading '**lateral flow testing support**' .

We are committed to safeguarding the community and would encourage as many people as possible to be tested in order to minimise the transmission of covid.

We will be sending out further information regarding the testing programme and associated consent forms next week.

Please ensure that your child understands that the lateral flow testing is an additional measure to help protect all in the school and the wider community. It will be introduced alongside the existing measures of social distancing, face coverings and respiratory and tactile hygiene. Please also remind your child about the Tier 4 restrictions and the need to remain in 'bubbles' in school, wear face coverings as instructed and regularly clean hands.

Thank you to the families that have kept us informed of covid related matters during the break and we send our best wishes to you all for a speedy recovery and a happy, healthy new year.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'AMM', followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Mr A Mohammed, B.Ed.(Hons)  
Headteacher