



18th December 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

The Start of the New Term - January 2021

I had believed that I had written my last letter to you of 2020; however as you may be aware the Department of Education took the decision to publish late yesterday instructions on the start of the new term which we are now expected to act upon <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-and-childcare-settings-return-in-january-2021/schools-and-childcare-settings-return-in-january-2021>

The government has said that primary school pupils and students in examination Years 11 and 13 will return to school immediately after Christmas but that other secondary aged students will return the following week (from Monday 11th January). We have planned an INSET day on Monday 4th January, which you are already aware of, which should be factored in. Therefore:

- Students in Years 11 and 13 will return to school on Tuesday 5th January and be taught in lessons. Year 12 and 13 were due to be in examinations that week and these are interlinked in how they are organised through the use of the available space. Therefore examinations for both years will now run starting the following week on the same timetable as before.
- Students in Years 7 to 10 and Year 12 will be taught remotely using Microsoft Teams from Tuesday onwards.
- Young people that are entitled to free schools meals, but are not due to be in schools in the week commencing 4th January, will be entitled to a voucher for £15 for the week. The school will be issuing the appropriate families with a voucher. The vouchers can be used in a range of stores, including Tesco, Sainsbury's, Morrisons, Aldi, Iceland, Asda and McColls and are restricted to food products. Digital vouchers will be delivered to parents/carers' mobile phones or tablets but please contact the school if you require a paper voucher instead.

Our students have been prepared to use Microsoft Teams and I would ask that everyone visits the school website <https://www.chewvalleyschool.co.uk/covid-arrangements-at-chew-valley-school>. Here there are links to everything needed including guides on using Microsoft Teams which can be downloaded to a phone or a computer. Now is a good time to say that we have a new school website which I was going to inform you of at the start of the new term but am taking the opportunity to do so at this time as I need to direct you there.

You perhaps also may have seen announced this week that students and teachers will have access to mass testing from January at school. That means that staff will be tested weekly (with results taking 30 minutes) and students who are identified as close contacts of someone testing positive, can be tested daily for 7 consecutive days and remain in school if they test negative. This testing would be optional with those who were not consenting being subject to the normal 10 day (following recent change down from 14 day) self-isolation.

Schools have been told to administer these tests themselves and need to allocate at least five staff to carry out the process. We are currently working through the implications of this and I will contact you as soon as we return around the detail including gaining consent (or not if that is your wish) for your children to be involved.

Can I once more wish you all a very happy Christmas.

With best wishes

Gareth Beynon
Headteacher