



6 January 2021

Dear Parent

As you will all be aware, the government has announced a full national lockdown for the country with the majority of primary and secondary schools only providing onsite education to children of key workers and vulnerable students. We have not been given information about how long this will last, apart from that it will be for at least this half term. I must stress that schools receive these media announcements at the same time as the general public and are often waiting for further information or clarity on a situation.

Key worker/vulnerable students

Thank you to parents who have notified us that their children require key worker provision in school. Our key worker students have been organised into small groups to maintain distancing and will remain in their Year group bubbles. They will be following the live lessons that are being provided by their teachers.

Live lessons

I am very proud of the fact that we are now running a full provision of live lessons at Lees Brook. As you can imagine, this has taken a huge amount of organisation and a lot of staff training – a year ago we wouldn't have even imagined that we would be teaching online and I don't think I had even heard of Microsoft Teams! There will inevitably be some issues to iron out, especially as for some Year groups, this is their first experience of live lessons. However overall we have had an excellent start.

For the live lessons, we strongly encourage that cameras are on as it is difficult to teach effectively to a set of blank screens. Without being able to see the students, teachers aren't able to gauge the students' engagement and participation in the lesson. So far there have been no incidents of poor behaviour, but please be aware that if students demonstrate inappropriate behaviour at any time they will be removed from the lesson by the member of staff.

Year 11

There has been an announcement regarding GCSE examinations this afternoon. While we are not aware of the final detail, it has been reported that only Centre Assessed Grades will be used. We are still awaiting final guidance on the Year 11 vocational qualifications. **It is vital that Year 11 students are still accessing live lessons, the work that is completed by students between now and the summer will be used as evidence towards these grades.** Further information will be sent to Year 11 parents this week.

I can confirm that the external examinations due to take place tomorrow and next week will still go ahead.

Lateral Flow Testing

We are continuing with our plans to implement lateral flow testing in school. This will initially begin with testing the staff and key worker students in school. More detailed information and consent forms will be sent to those parents it applies to as soon as possible. The arrangements for the tests are being put in place in accordance with DfE and PHE guidelines and the setting up of this is a significant task. I want to reassure you that testing will only commence when all training and correct procedures are in place.

Many thanks as ever for your continued support.

Yours faithfully

Zoe House
Headteacher