

Friday, 14th January 2022

Dear Parent/Carer,

Firstly, Happy New Year. It seems quite some time since the end of term, and my previous newsletter to you, but even though we are two weeks into the new year, I hope it has started well and continues in that vein.

In terms of what we expect from our students, nothing changes: be nice, and work hard. Students have returned very well, have been ready to learn and have adapted to the restrictions in place with a mature attitude. I am very proud of how the vast, vast majority have started 2022.

Attendance

As always, the first message is about attendance.

Where COVID-19 self-isolation periods affect students' attendance, this cannot be helped. The numbers we have out currently do have an impact on our overall attendance and we send the very best to everyone who has tested positive, and look forward to seeing you back at TCA soon. However, it is exceptionally important that students attend every day, no excuses, otherwise. There may be occasional exceptional reasons why students cannot attend, but please work with us to ensure that your child does not miss a single day.

Year 7 = 91.2%
Year 8 = 93.7%
Year 9 = 93.1%
Year 10 = 86.4%
Year 11 = 93.5%

Self-isolation and COVID-19 testing

At present, government guidance is as follows:

- Students currently do not need a confirmatory PCR test if they test positive on a lateral flow test
- From Monday, 17th January, self-isolation has been cut to five full days from the point of a positive test
- Anyone who tests positive should then do a lateral flow test on day 5 and 6, and can then return to the Academy as long as both are negative



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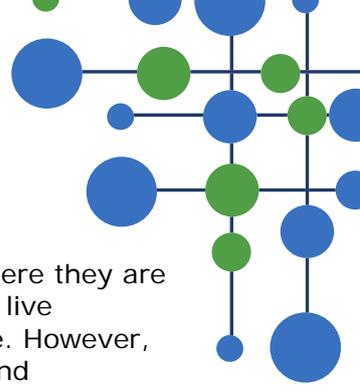
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Remote learning

Where students are self-isolating after testing positive for COVID-19, and where they are able to, they should be logging onto Microsoft Teams and taking part in their live lessons. Clearly, if someone is unwell and is unable to, this is understandable. However, for asymptomatic cases, we would expect students to be attending lessons and completing all work set. Should you need support with IT equipment or anything else, please contact your child's Student Manager.

Social media and safe internet use

Our curriculum encompasses online safety and responsible use of the internet and it is really important that parents and carers support this work too. Having positive conversations around internet use, screen time and social media is really important and there are great resources for parents and carers to use at www.internetmatters.org.uk.

You can also access lots of information on keeping your child safe online via the National Online Safety Platform here: <https://nationalonlinesafety.com/enrol/thornhill-community-academy>. This is provided free of charge for parents and carers of students who attend TCA. As you know, it is important that students' wellbeing is looked after in the face-to-face *and* digital worlds, so please ensure that you support us in keeping your child safe on the internet.

Next week – uniform letters

Next week, we will be issuing students with letters around certain aspects of uniform which need to be resolved by Monday, 24th January. A number of students are wearing false nails which have been bought for the Christmas break. These are not appropriate for school and must be removed by the date above. Should you need any help or support with uniform, please do get in touch with us at TCA or visit <https://www.uniform-exchange.org/>, an amazing charity who provide free uniform to families in the local area.

Year 11 mock exams

Well done to year 11, some of whom have been undertaking their 'real' exams in vocational subjects this week. Amongst the backdrop of a challenging time, our students have, yet again, showed calmness and composure and have done a great job. Keep it up, year 11!

Period 7 sessions

A reminder for parents/carers of year 11 students that compulsory catch-up sessions are back up and running as of this week. Students are expected to attend Maths on Monday, Science on Tuesday and English on Wednesday (though English is by invite at the moment). On the occasion that a teacher is absent, students are aware they can use the Library to complete private study and revision in the time they would ordinarily be in P7.

Enjoy the weekend, and thank you for your ongoing support.

Yours sincerely,

Matthew Burton
Headteacher