

Principal: Mark Woodhouse

Brandon Road
Swaffham
Norfolk
PE37 7DZ
T: 01760 721480 E: office@tnha.org.uk <http://tnha.org.uk/>



25th March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re: End of Spring Term Update

It is sometimes hard to believe that it has been just over twelve weeks since the term started in such unusual fashion. It has been an incredibly busy term, and one filled again with lots of unknowns and circumstances none of us thought we would ever need to manage or find ourselves in. It has been great to welcome our students back into the academy these past few weeks to resume face-to-face teaching and they have dealt with the challenge of this with a positive and determined attitude. I hope as we head into the Easter break and start the summer term, that the renewed optimism in how the country is now tackling the Coronavirus pandemic can give us all a little more hope for some more normality.

COVID Testing: The students who have been COVID tested in the academy have been fantastic in how they have responded to this challenge. We have now completed all the initial testing on site and as per the Government guidance students, who want them, have been issued with testing kits to continue testing at home through the Easter holiday. Tests should be carried out twice a week and three to five days apart. We have previously issued guidance on reporting tests results and within the test instructions it highlights how these results should be reported to the NHS. I would ask, for obvious reasons that if your child does test positive that you inform the academy immediately so that we can seek guidance on how we need to respond.

Whilst I am sure that as families you will get into a routine around testing at home, I would ask that every effort is made for your child to take a test either on the evening of Sunday 11th April or the morning of Monday 12th April, when we return for the Summer Term. When term starts again on Monday 12th April, there will be no staggered start and students will return together so in order to limit the chances of any potential COVID cases spreading at this point, the guidance from the health authorities is that we advise our students to test themselves as they return.

We have yet to receive official guidance on how long the home testing process will continue but we will keep issuing testing kits as we are asked to do, to the students who want them, and will keep you updated should the guidance we receive change.

COVID Isolating: As I have mentioned previously, it is important that we are notified as soon as possible should your child receive a positive test result. As an academy we are then asked to follow a process in consultation with Public Health England (PHE) and the local health authorities. They will work through with us a process to identify students who need to isolate as close contacts. Some of the general guidance around this has changed from the position we were in during the autumn term. However, ultimately we will be guided by PHE as to the steps that we need to take to contain any further spread of the virus. If we do have to contact you because your child has been identified as a close contact it will be in line with the guidance that we are issued and have been advised by PHE.

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Determined to be...

'the best that we can be'



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Year 11 Grades: Whilst the return to the academy has been crucial for all students, it has been even more so for our Year 11s as we pull together the evidence that we will be required to collect to award them grades this summer. As I write this the Department of Education is still finalising the official guidance for schools and academies on this, but what is clear is that there is still time for Year 11 students to influence the evidence of the grades that they will be awarded. The weeks we have between Easter and May Half Term will be critical in this process. The students will not sit traditional exams but these will be replaced by internal, and generally in class assessments at various points through the half term. We have spent the last week or so compiling assessment plans for each subject areas and we will be sharing these plans with the students so that they can see when they will be taking various tests. There will also be other evidence that we will need and collect from work that they will do in their lessons and coursework for certain courses that is being completed.

We hope to receive the official guidance on the processes we will need to undertake and will again update you when we have this information.

Free School Meal Vouchers and School Money: Once again, the local authority will be issuing Free School Meal vouchers to the families of children who receive these meals over the Easter Holiday. Vouchers should be redeemable in a similar way to how they have been before and emails will be sent out from Monday 29th March informing parents of this.

I am aware that circumstances may have changed for many of you so if you think your child may be eligible for Free School Meals moving forward please check with us. More Free School Meal information and an application form can be found at this link: [NCC FSM](#)

In the academy, our caterers continue to run a limited service at breacktimes and lunchtimes for students to pre-order and this will continue be the case as we go into the summer term. Please could I ask that if your child uses this service that you regularly check their School Money account to ensure that there are sufficient funds to cover their orders. Again, if you have any issues in accessing your School Money account then please let us know.

Staff Leaving: Unfortunately, the end of term sees some of our colleagues in the academy leave to move onto pastures new. Miss Crone, who has been an integral part of our MFL team this year is will unfortunately be leaving us and we wish her all the very best with her future endeavours as well as thanking her for all she has given the academy and our students in the time that she has been with us.

Summer Term: The summer term will begin on Monday 12th April. As previously mentioned there will be no staggered start to students returning and they will return as normal to Week B. We will still be maintaining the various measures we have put in place including the students being taught in their year group bubbles. Our aim is that as the restrictions across the country begin to ease, that we may be able to ease some of the COVID systems we have put in place and return to what was our normal, now over a year ago. Again, we will keep you updated as and when these things may change so that you have the information to help support your children at home.

The past twelve months sometimes almost seems unreal. Our academy, our country and our world is in a completely different place to where we were a year ago and whilst there have been many challenges and struggles in that time, our students, your children, have been brilliant in dealing with all the changes and difficulties that they have had to face. As always, I am hugely grateful for the support you have provided in helping to keep the education of your children on track this term. I hope that as we head into the Easter holiday and start the summer term in a few weeks that we can approach the summer with a cautious but more optimistic outlook.

After such a busy and challenging term, I wish you and your families a restful and safe Easter break and look forward to a more positive and optimistic summer term.

Kind regards and keep safe,



Mr. Woodhouse
Principal