

The Bishops' Blue Coat Church of England High School

Known Nurtured Inspired

Headteacher: Ian Wilson BA PGCE MA NPQH



18th December 2020

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

Yesterday we were told by the Department for Education (DfE) that there should be a staggered start to term in January 2021. If you wish to read the press release [click here](#). Every adult and student at Bishops' have exhibited the desire to do the right thing, consider the needs of others and maintain as safe an environment as possible this term. We are blessed to work with wonderful young people and I hope you enjoyed our annual Carol Service earlier this week and in particular this lovely poem <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ScWyn9eR67Q&feature=youtu.be&safe=true>

Why is there a staggered start to the Easter Term?

The DfE's overarching aim is to provide time so that schools can establish the infrastructure to deliver mass testing to staff and students on a regular basis. Mass testing should help fight the spread of the virus. It will also mean that anyone who is a close contact of somebody who tests positive and has no symptoms will not have to self-isolate. Instead they will be regularly tested in school, each day, for 7 school days. This will mean that students who are close contacts and test negative will not miss school.

What will the staggered start look like?

- **Monday 4th January** will be an INSET day with employees in school and students on holiday.
- Students in examination years 10, 11 and 13 will attend as normal on Tuesday 5th January.
- Vulnerable children or the children of Critical Workers in all year groups should also attend as normal on **Tuesday 5th January**. A questionnaire will be part of our communication on Monday 4th January regarding this provision.
- From Tuesday 5th January, students in Years 7, 8, 9 and 12 will learn remotely. They will be expected to follow their normal timetable as closely as possible for each day.
- Examinations scheduled from the 4th January will take place as planned.

Will there be further updates?

Further guidance and information will be communicated during the afternoon of Monday 4th January. However, as we all know with government announcements, things can change. If this is the case, we will update our website news section.

Now all that remains, on behalf of all the staff at Bishops', is to wish you a heartfelt Happy Christmas and all the best for the New Year and thank you for your patience and support.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Ian Wilson'.

Ian Wilson
Headteacher