

5<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear parents/carers

Once again in light of the national lockdown I write to update on our school status and the work we are doing at UHS to support our whole school community. I am sure that you will understand that this letter is lengthy in order to answer many of the questions emerging from yesterday's announcements.

Although the school has been asked to close for face-to-face teaching, learning will continue. Remote learning commenced for Years 11 and 13 today and for all other year groups starts on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January. We anticipate that this situation will exist until at least February half term.

**Public examinations** for students in Years 11 and 13 throughout January are still taking place. We have contacted all students and families involved in these examinations separately today.

We have also provided on-site education for our more **vulnerable children and children of key workers** from the start of term. Staff from our Flexible Learning Centre have been in contact directly with some families today to invite students to school from Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January. If you are a critical key worker and are unable to source care for your child during this first part of term, please contact the school office ([office@uhs.org.uk](mailto:office@uhs.org.uk)) to book a supervised study space. We will confirm arrangements back to you by email.

In detail, **students in all year groups** should log on to Microsoft Teams at 8.40am to remotely attend registration/tutor time with their tutors each day. Tutors will set the scene for the day and deliver messages and updates. They will be best placed to resolve queries. Each day students will follow their normal school timetable. Please note that timetables for some students may have changed since last term. Students can check their timetable on Show My Homework or their calendars on Microsoft Teams. Please confirm to your son/daughter that they will be expected to attend registration and five lessons for the full school day.

The Prime Minister indicated that GCSE and A-level summer examinations would not go ahead as planned. However, it is very important that students in their examination years understand that GCSE and Advanced studies continue. Alternative assessments will be put in place and students need to continue to work hard. We are awaiting further information about this.

I appreciate that for many Year 7 families the UHS remote learning platforms will be new. I attach a guide to support you and your son/daughter in gaining access. This can also be viewed on our website [here](#).

We are able to offer some support to families in need with **IT access**. We are also prioritising laptops for families with limited IT at home. Please contact your child's tutor in the first instance if you require any assistance.

All students can download the latest version of Microsoft Office free to use on their personal computers and mobile devices. Students can download and install the latest version of Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and OneNote on up to five different PCs or Mac

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computers and five mobile devices such as a phone or tablet. For more information and instructions, visit <https://www.uhs.org.uk/page/?title=Microsoft+Office&pid=145>.

A reminder that students have access to our [study portal](#) that focuses on developing key independent learning skills and that they should be using this as part of their everyday learning. We have also developed user instructions on how to use this platform to support your child when working independently at home. They can be found [here](#).

The **Year 11 virtual parents' evening** will still take place on 14th January. This will be in two parts. A wellbeing appointment which will take place between 2pm and 3pm and will involve tutors and heads of year and subject specific appointments between 3pm and 6.30pm which will be hosted by Year 11 teaching staff.

Students will be targeted with appointments for specific subjects only. Letters detailing specific subjects will be sent to parents soon. More information about the virtual parents' evening can be found on our [website](#). **Please note that there will be no online lessons for any year group after 1.15pm on this day as the parents' evening will begin at 2pm.**

During periods of remote learning students must continue to follow the rules set out for the national lockdown. This particularly includes those related to mixing with other households.

I would like to advise you that to support our bubbles for this year, we have recently appointed a number of staff to lead particular year groups. These staff will be monitoring students in their year groups and making contact/offering support as appropriate:

Year 7 – Mr Sharda

Year 8 – Mr Toma

Year 9 – Mr Janar

Year 10 – Mr Smith

Year 11 – Mr Wolf

Year 12 – Mr Churchill/Miss Mangat

Parents of students eligible for **free school meals** will receive a supermarket voucher this week, to cover 2 weeks. Eligible sixth form students will receive an increased bursary payment instead. This provision will continue throughout the school closure but the method may change beyond the first 2 weeks.

We also understand that the circumstance of some families are continuing to change due to Covid19 – it is possible that you may now be eligible to claim free school meals. If you think this could be the case, please complete the [application form](#) available on the school website. Even if you are not currently eligible, by completing this form the system will alert us if you were to become eligible at a later date.

From Monday 4th January, Hillingdon residents can book slots for a Lateral Flow Test (LFT) if they wish to, at the Beck Theatre, to test all those **without** any COVID-19 symptoms.

The rapid lateral flow swab tests provide results within an hour and help to identify those who are unknowingly carrying the virus. It also enables those who test positive, their household members and their close contacts, to self-isolate, which can help drive down the R rate locally and save lives.

For more information and to make LFT bookings, one booking per person please click here: [Hillingdon Lateral Flow Tests](#)

Although the school site will remain open during the lockdown, staffing will be reduced. However, if you need to contact the school, please call 01895 234060 or email [office@uhs.org.uk](mailto:office@uhs.org.uk). Voicemails will be continuously monitored during normal opening hours. We will endeavour to respond where needed as quickly as we can.

As per the first lockdown period, I will update parents regularly and place all these communications on our website for your reference. Best wishes to your family, stay safe.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'N B Clemens', written over a horizontal line.

**N B Clemens**  
**Principal**