



November 2020

Dear Families

### **Academy Closure Years 8 & 11**

I hope that you and your families are managing to negotiate lockdown without too much stress and strain. Sandwell continues to face significantly higher infection rates than the national average for COVID-19 and this is placing pressure on all schools across the borough.

I would like to update you on our current situation and the actions that we are planning for the coming week to try and ensure consistency of education for our students. Our processes are holding up remarkably well at present.

However, we are facing continuing pressure from the Test and Trace system which has enforced a significant number of our staff to self-isolate due to contact with people who have tested positive. When staff are contacted by Test and Trace, they must self-isolate for 14 days as per the guidance. We currently have almost 25% of our teaching and 10% of our support staff absent from school which is far more than we would normally expect at this time of year.

In light of the COVID transmission rates in schools, Public Health have reviewed DfE guidance alongside the latest medical evidence. Going forward, when a case is identified in a class the advice from Sandwell's Public Health team will be to isolate all members in that class, including staff. This is due to the increased risk of airborne transmission of COVID-19 in enclosed spaces (e.g. classrooms) over an extended period (e.g. class period).

Subsequently we have made the difficult decision **to close Years 8 & 11 from Monday, 30 November until Friday 4 December, with students returning on Monday, 7 December 2020.** We will be providing remote education for all students in these year groups.

**Year 11 students will continue their timetabled lessons as normal. The links to all online lessons will be available on their Microsoft Teams Calendar.** Students will be expected to log on to these sessions and families will be contacted if their children fail to log on.

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**If your child is in Year 8, please follow the timetable below:**

Mon am	Mon pm	Tues am	Tues pm	Weds am	Weds pm	Thurs am	Thurs pm	Fri am	Fri pm
10.20-11.30	14:10 - 15:00	9:30 - 11.30	14:10 - 15:00	9:30 - 10:20	1pm - 3pm	9:30 - 11.30	14:10 - 15:00	9:30 - 11.30	14:10 - 15:00
English	L4L	L4L	Maths	L4L	L4L	L4L	Science	L4L	English

**Students should access the link to each of their lessons via their Microsoft Teams Calendar.**

For students unable to access online lessons, please contact your child’s Head of Year so a paper pack can be posted home.

These are challenging times for everyone, and we are grateful for the continued support from families and students in ensuring that we can continue to provide a safe and meaningful education for all our students.

Kind regards



**Mr D Irish  
Principal**

**WE MUST KEEP ON  
PROTECTING EACH OTHER**



**STAY ALERT TO  
THE SYMPTOMS**

**HIGH TEMPERATURE OR  
NEW CONTINUOUS COUGH OR  
LOSS OF TASTE OR SMELL?**



FIND OUT HOW TO GET A TEST, AND HOW LONG TO ISOLATE AT:  
[nhs.uk/coronavirus](https://nhs.uk/coronavirus)

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