

10th December 2020

Dear parents and carers,

We have had several enquiries in recent days regarding attendance during the last week of term, so I thought it best to be clear around some decisions we have made regarding arrangements for next week, our standard expectations as a school and to share with you the guidance that we are required to follow from the Department for Education (DfE).

You may have heard that this Tuesday, having realised that that our duty to 'track and trace' any positive coronavirus cases might have senior members of staff working throughout the weekend and first week of the holidays [including Christmas Eve], the DfE have allowed us to move a teacher training day to Friday 18th December.

Having discussed the options with senior members of staff and with the full support of our governors, **we will be closed to all pupils next Friday. Therefore, the last day of the term for all students will be Thursday 17th December.**

This teacher training day replaces the one we had planned on March 26th 2021, which will now be a normal teaching day for all students.

We recognise that this may cause some difficulties for a few parents and, should you have absolutely no other alternative, we will be able to provide care for your child for that day. To take up this offer, *you must contact us in advance* by emailing enquiries@jcsc.co.uk by 10am on Monday 14th December.

This has an impact on year 11 students who are due to sit a mock science exam that morning. This single exam has been rearranged and will now be taken on the afternoon of Wednesday January 6th instead.

Until the end of term, we are required to follow the DfE guidance on attendance which says: "It is vital for all children to attend school to minimise, as far as possible, the longer-term impact of the pandemic on children's education, wellbeing and wider development. Missing out on more time in the classroom risks pupils falling further behind. Those with higher overall absence tend to achieve less well in both primary and secondary school. School attendance has therefore been mandatory from the beginning of the autumn term. This means from that point, the usual rules on school attendance apply, including:

- parents' duty to secure their child's attendance regularly at school (where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age)
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' codes of conduct"
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We will, therefore, be recording and following-up absences as usual next week, and applying our normal sanctions for non-attendance where necessary.

Whilst we are all looking forward to the end of term and a welcome break, next week is an important week of learning for all our students. This year, it's more important than ever for us to maximise the time we have available.

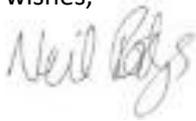
It's an incredibly important week for our Year 11 students who will sit their mock GCSE exams in English, Maths and Science from Monday to Thursday. Year 11 parents - please support them in their revision, and by ensuring they arrive prepared and punctual. If you have any questions or queries, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Thank you for your understanding and ongoing support.

As I've said on numerous occasions, please do keep in touch – we are trying to do all we can to support you, your children and each other through this stressful time.

Most importantly, and now more than ever, stay safe and take care of yourselves and your loved ones.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Neil Rodgers'.

Neil Rodgers
Executive Headteacher