

CANFORD

Canford School

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From the Headmaster
B.A.M. Vessey, MA MBA
email: headmaster@canford.com

31 December 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I do hope that you have managed to have a reasonably relaxing and convivial festive season to date. We have been waiting to follow up on my communication of 19th December as much uncertainty has remained on the requirements for the start of term.

Could you please read and review the following carefully. I appreciate this letter is rather long but it does contain key information regarding the return to school for year groups, plans for mass testing and includes follow up action for some parents/guardians.

The Government has now confirmed that schools are required to organise a staggered start to on-site provision of education for the new term.

Alongside this staggered return we have been working on implementing the mass testing programme which the Government has asked schools to put in place as soon as they are able once term commences. We will not receive the final guidance for this testing exercise (or the lateral flow tests themselves) until Monday 4th January and so our plans have had to be based on what we think will be possible.

The updated Government guidance for secondary schools, as we currently understand it, indicates that initially pupils in 5th form and U6th will be prioritised to receive remote education. However, at Canford we will ensure that a full remote teaching programme will be delivered to all year groups as per the existing timetable from our published start of term on Wednesday 6th January.

INTERNATIONAL PUPILS

All international pupils (including Channel Island pupils) who have fixed travel plans or are currently staying with UK guardians may return to Canford from 5th January. In order to ensure that we can organise the return to school and testing on arrival at Canford appropriately, we would ask parents/ guardians of those international pupils wishing to return from 5th January to inform us of their return plans via maeve.lucas@canford.com, by 12.00 mid-day on Sunday 3rd January. Once we have details of those returning, we will send information about how arrival back to school and testing will be managed. These details will be sent later on Monday 4th January.

Those international pupils in the Shell, 4th Form and L6th year groups who do return to school from 5th January will receive their academic teaching remotely in a designated on-site venue until their respective year groups return for full on-site education on Monday 18th January.

KEY WORKERS

The Government guidance also indicates that, from the start of term, we can look after the children of designated key workers on site should this be required. This will apply to both day and boarding pupils whose parents are specified as key workers. If you meet the key worker criteria and would like your child to attend school please do let us know via covidsafe@canford.com by 12.00 mid-day on Sunday 3rd January so that we can make arrangements for managed arrival at school and testing as required. Details of this will be sent later on Monday 4th January.

The following link provides further information on key workers who are able to access educational settings.

children of critical workers

Please note that, as with international pupils who return at the start of term, learning will be on a remote basis in a venue on site until the respective year groups return to full on-site education.

Under the guidance we are unable to deliver co-curricular activities for those pupils who do return early.

5TH FORM AND U6TH

From Monday 11th January we will deliver normal on-site education to the 5th Form and U6th groups with boarders in these groups returning on Sunday 10th January.

TESTING 5TH FORM

We plan to carry out the initial testing for the 5th Form as follows:

Sunday 10th January

2.30pm-5.30pm:

- all day and boarding 5th Form pupils should arrive at school between 2.30-5.30pm.
- Parents should proceed directly to the Sports Centre car park and wait in their vehicles while their children are tested.
- Pupils arriving by taxi should proceed directly to the Assembly Hall before going to their boarding house.
- Wearing a mask and avoiding contact with others, pupils should go straight to the Assembly Hall and enter via the main entrance where they will be registered and tested.
- If a queue develops during the testing window we may need to ask some pupils to return to their cars for a short period while the backlog is cleared.
- If the test is negative they should return to their car and proceed to their boarding house to unpack (boarders) or return home (day pupils).
- If the test is positive the pupil will need to return home and a follow up PCR test will need to be arranged via the NHS as per Government guidance - see link below.

<https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>

(international pupils will be isolated at school with a test arranged via the Health Centre)

TESTING U6TH

We plan to carry out the initial testing for the U6th Form as follows:

Sunday 10th January

6.00pm-9.00pm

- all day and boarding U6th pupils should arrive at school between 6.00pm-9.00pm.
- Parents should proceed directly to the Sports Centre car park and wait in their vehicles while their children are tested.
- Pupils arriving by taxi should proceed directly to the Assembly Hall before going to their boarding house.
- Wearing a mask and avoiding contact with others, pupils should go straight to the Assembly Hall and enter via the main entrance where they will be registered and tested.
- If a queue develops during the testing window we may need to ask some pupils to return to their cars for a short period while the backlog is cleared.
- If the test is negative they should return to their car and proceed to their boarding house to unpack (boarders) or return home (day pupils).
- If the test is positive the pupil will need to return home and a follow up PCR test will need to be arranged via the NHS as per Government guidance - see link below.

<https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>

(international pupils will be isolated at school with a test arranged via the Health Centre)

SHELL, 4TH AND L6TH

From Wednesday 6th January we will be teaching the Shell, 4th and L6th groups remotely.

Full on-site education will be delivered to Shells, 4th Form and L6th from Monday 18th January with boarders in these groups returning on Sunday 17th January.

Please note that UK pupils with siblings in 5th Form and U6th cannot return early.

ARRIVAL TIMES FOR TESTING FOR SHELLS, 4TH AND L6TH

We will provide more specific details on designated arrival times and testing arrangements for Shells, 4ths and L6th in due course but we are planning to test day pupils on the Thursday/Friday (14th/15th January) before their return to on-site education and boarding pupils on Sunday 17th January when they return to school.

CONSENT FORM FOR TESTING

Our thanks to those who have provided consent for the lateral flow testing already via the link in the recent letter from the Bursar. However, a number of consents are still outstanding and it is important we have this in place before pupils return so please do complete the consent form as soon as possible via this link:

[Click here for Covid-19 Testing Consent Form](#)

We do understand that these plans may cause frustration and potentially some inconvenience in relation to designated arrival slots for testing, but I hope you will appreciate that we need to ensure the testing programme can be managed effectively and robustly and this requires a degree of segmentation and a need for separation until pupils have been tested. All the pupils will be tested again 3-5 days after their first test. Staff will be tested before the pupils return and at regular intervals thereafter. The testing programme will also give the potential to reduce the impact of isolation of close contacts of a positive case where appropriate.

Given the nature of this crisis, and the reality that the situation moves fast and decisions are taken which often lie beyond our control, we cannot guarantee absolutely that arrangements will not change again but we will endeavour to keep you informed as soon as we are able should this occur.

Your ongoing support and co-operation in these challenging times is greatly appreciated and we will continue to do all we can to ensure your sons and daughters receive as stimulating and engaging an education as possible in an environment which is as safe and secure as possible.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ben Vessey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping flourish at the end of the name.

Ben Vessey