

Thursday 31st December 2020

Dear Families,

Firstly, we hope that you managed to have a restful Christmas and have had as good a break as possible in the circumstances.

We thought that it would be helpful to write to you outlining our current understanding of how the school will be operating from Tuesday 5th January. However, it is important to state that circumstances are developing rather rapidly and, therefore, please be aware that this is subject to possible change. As ever, we will try to communicate with you quickly and clearly, if things need to be adjusted.

**Attendance**

The school will be open for all students, unless you have been given specific guidance from your child's medical specialist that they are clinically extremely vulnerable and should shield. However, we do appreciate many of you may be feeling apprehensive once again about your child attending, despite the huge value in children being in school for education, social and well-being reasons. We will therefore respect individual parental decision-making where we clearly and fully understand the reasons for the choice, if it has been decided that a child will not attend on a short-term basis.

**Testing**

You may have seen the media coverage regarding the use of Rapid Flow Testing in schools for staff and secondary age pupils. Following discussions with the Local Authority, we will be seeking further guidance about how Special Schools will be supported to implement this. Therefore, we will not be performing tests during the first week of term as a minimum, whilst we seek further clarification from Government about how this is to be done safely and effectively, and who will be responsible for it. We will continue to keep you updated as this develops.

**Risk Assessment**

The school's response to the guidance provided by Government for Special Schools has been reviewed in line with the updated documentation published on Christmas Eve. Whilst there were some small adjustments to the guidance and therefore our response, these will not change the way in which we have been leading the school. The same systems will remain in place, as will the same hygiene processes, as we do not believe that there is anything further we can do to make the school safer. The three documents are available to read here, all starting Covid-19 - <https://frankwise.oxon.sch.uk/professionals/policies-statements-and-reports/>.

We fully appreciate that the changing rate of infection, both nationally and locally, may be cause for concern, but please rest assured that we are continuing to do everything we can to make the school as safe as is possible in the circumstances.

If you would like to contact either of us to discuss the current situation, then please do not hesitate to pick up the phone or email us. Working together in partnership is going to be key to us successfully navigating the next stage of this difficult period.

Kind regards,



Heidi Dennison and Simon Knight  
**Joint Headteachers**