

5<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

As you will be undoubtedly aware I have the unfortunate task of writing to you following the Prime Minister's announcement at 8pm on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January. Due to rising cases of infection with COVID 19, Oakwood School will now be closed from Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2021 until February half term in the first instance. The school will remain open only for Vulnerable and Keyworker students as identified by our earlier communication. If you feel that your child meets the criteria for this category of students please ensure that you complete and return the form to [keyworker@oakwood.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:keyworker@oakwood.surrey.sch.uk), as per the letter dated 30<sup>th</sup> December 2020.

Please note that from Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January, all students and staff may attend the school in non-school uniform/informal dress.

### Remote Learning

Teachers at the school will continue to set and monitor Remote Learning for all other students. Please refer to the information regarding remote learning disseminated on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021. This morning the Senior Leadership Team at Oakwood met to discuss how we may further enhance our equipment and resources to support and encourage engaging learning from home for your child. This of course includes The Oak National Academy which has been previously brought to your attention. A revised Oakwood Deal Online is currently being drawn up to include all of our latest developments and resources and will be distributed to all teaching staff on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January so they may deliver lessons and tasks to engage your child, subject to their own ICT capacity at home.

Please could I respectfully ask parents to encourage students to log into their learning tasks in line with the normal lesson times on their school timetable. This morning I sat with a colleague who was monitoring a Year 11 lesson from 9.05am and by the end of the lesson only four students had logged on.

### GCSE Exams and Monitoring Progress

Within the Prime Minister's announcement last night was the news that next summer's GCSE exams will not run in the usual fashion due to the "unfairness" caused by missed learning time for students. ***The Creative I-Media GCSE exam, however, scheduled for Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2021 1-3pm will still take place, with revised arrangements in line with exam board regulations. Students taking this exam need to arrive at school in full school uniform and report to Mr Gladstone at the hall at 12.45pm.***

Mr Johnson stated that the Department for Education will be working with Ofqual to make "alternative arrangements" for other exams. As yet we are unclear what these alternative

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arrangements may look like and as such, it is entirely possible that Centre Assessed grades will, once again, play a significant part in student's final results for summer 2021.

Please, therefore, may I take this opportunity to encourage parents in supporting their Year 11 child in particular by completing all tasks set remotely to the very best of their ability. We will be asking various faculty areas in school to ensure that Year 11 tasks are set and completed to a sufficient standard to inform teacher predicted grades by February half term.

Furthermore, the school will be conducting a review of engagement from students in Year 10 and 11 from 20<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and will follow up through parental contact, any cases where there are concerns or a lack of engagement. It is imperative that students understand that this work will be used to inform any predicted grades teachers may have to make.

In Years 7-9, we will be regularly updating a spreadsheet to review pupil commitment and effort and to follow up on any cases of non-engagement.

I hope parents are reassured by the school's efforts to monitor progress of your child at this critical time.

### Track and Trace

For those students still attending school, it remains critical for parents to inform us of any cases of infection, symptoms shown or self-isolation within the family. Please, therefore, ensure that you complete the COVID infection form which can be found via the link below or on our website and/or inform relevant staff at school of the current family situation.

<https://www.oakwood.surrey.sch.uk/1672/covid-infection-form?search=COVID%20infection>

### Testing

Our current understanding is that the Department for Education wish us to proceed for the preparations for mass testing of asymptomatic pupils in school. This has already begun and we will continue with this to ensure we are robustly prepared for such a challenging demand. Further details of how the testing programme will be rolled out to staff and students alike will follow in due course. May I please once again appeal for any volunteers who may have the expertise to help us with this to contact our Business Manager, Hayley Mathews, on [hmathews@oakwood.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:hmathews@oakwood.surrey.sch.uk)

### Free School Meals

We fully anticipate the need for provision of Free School Meal vouchers to families who have this entitlement and whose child is being provided for via Remote Learning during this further lockdown. Details of how and when these will be issued will follow as soon as we have more detailed information from the Department for Education.

### Wellbeing

I fully appreciate that this is a difficult time. It is felt by staff, students and parents alike. Please can I refer you to the Wellbeing Bulletin circulated prior to Christmas should you feel that support is needed for yourself or child. I am pleased to inform you that further Wellbeing Bulletins will follow shortly as we enter this new lockdown period.

## Contact with School

Should your child have any queries or concerns regarding their Remote Learning, please remind them to contact their teachers in the first instance via the Show My homework portal. Parental concerns should be directed to [admin@oakwood.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:admin@oakwood.surrey.sch.uk) so that we may disseminate them to the relevant staff. May I respectfully remind parents to make direct contact with staff at the school and to avoid the widespread use of Social Media to discuss issues or problems which can often be unhelpful, particularly at this current time. All staff have been asked to ensure that they monitor and regularly respond to any contact from home and we will always follow this up so that any concerns or issues are satisfactorily resolved. Thank you.

I am only too aware that another national lockdown and full school closure is the last thing any of us want. As a school community we have shown the necessary collegiality, communication and consistency to ensure that we remain open as fully as possible for as long as possible. This recent set back is, therefore, extremely disappointing. However, I wish to reassure parents of our continued commitment in rising to this latest challenge and supporting the wellbeing and progress of your child.

Just as we have succeeded previously in getting Oakwood School back on its feet following the challenge of the COVID 19 virus, we will do so again and I look forward to working in partnership with you to ensure that the school emerges from this bigger, better and stronger than ever. Onward and upward!

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Potten', written over a horizontal line that extends to the right and then curves downwards at the end.

Mr S Potten  
Headteacher