



LONG CLOSE SCHOOL

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5 January 2021

Dear Parents,

May I start by wishing you all, with all the warmth at my disposal, a very Happy New Year.

I had hoped that 2021 would present fewer challenges for us all and that my first letter to you would be in a different vein. However, my optimism has been short-lived culminating in the announcement made by the Prime Minister at 8.00pm yesterday.

As you will have heard from the briefing, unfortunately the current, rapid spread of COVID necessitates a national Lockdown, effective immediately. Boris Johnson indicated that the situation would remain under review, but it is likely that the Lockdown will continue for the first half of term, until mid-February at the earliest.

This is clearly not what any of us wanted, but we have been here before and we will again react swiftly to ensure your child receives a continuous and excellent education. We had planned for the likelihood of a further national Lockdown, and potential physical shutdown of schools and we are in a position to ensure your children's education is both uninterrupted and delivered to a very high standard.

- Our ambition is to have fully transitioned to online teaching and learning from Wednesday 6 January. Your child's timetable will be made available by the end of the day.
- All students in years 3 and up have their own personal device – this is a significant difference to the last lockdown. Having the same device, with the same software and safeguarding features, makes transitioning to online teaching and learning far simpler because we have a level playing field, and far more effective because we are not having to spend time on the technical basics.
- Your child also now has access to Ed Tech platforms that will support them as a complement to online lessons.
- For those year groups that will be learning online, all lessons will be delivered interactively by Teams, pastoral support will be maintained, and individual interventions and academic clinics continued. Initiatives such as wellbeing check-ins, time for social & emotional learning, virtual parents' evenings and teacher check-ins, online assemblies will also carry on as before.

Our Early Years setting will be open for pupils in Nursery and Pre-School from Wednesday 6 January and session times will remain the same. This excludes Reception however, as per the [clarified guidelines](#) issued (see page 13). We will also continue to be open for [vulnerable](#) children and the children of [critical workers](#). Please let us know as soon as possible if you fall into this group.

We recognise that this continues to be an unsettling time for the country, and for parents especially. We continue to put the wellbeing of our students, and also our staff, at the top of the agenda. At every stage of this pandemic, we have sought to manage the challenges with a sense of calm and positivity, however exceptional the circumstances. I remain very proud of how the community has responded over the last 9 months, and have every confidence that we will continue to weather the next phase with characteristic resolve and flexibility.

Cognita provides a range of wellbeing support materials for educators and also parents, and this is [publicly available to you on this page of the website](#).

Our avowed aim is to provide your children with a continuous, strong educational provision, building on the resilience and achievement witnessed in 2020. The sense of community that has permeated throughout the pandemic leaves me in no doubt that the next few weeks of remote learning will continue to go smoothly.

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or concerns.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nijjar', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Miss Nijjar
Headteacher