

Ref GWA/LWO

23 February 2021



Dear Families

I hope you and your children managed to have a break last week from home schooling in spite of the limited number of fun activities available to you. A renewed interest in reading, walking and cycling appears to have saved me from the delights of another visit to B&Q. What follows is a general update based on still limited information from the Government with a view to more detail being shared with you as soon as possible.

As expected, we are looking to welcome all your children back to school from **Monday 8 March**. When they return, they will come back to the same regime and high expectations that they left. Student and staff safety will remain our number one priority. We will still be engaging in deep cleaning, operating one-way systems, insisting on the use of hand sanitiser, and face masks (plain blue or black). Furthermore, full school uniform will be expected and students will need to rely on their own equipment not that borrowed from a friend. Now would be a good time to check that your child knows the whereabouts of their stationery, lanyard, school shoes and that they can still fit into their uniform! Items of nearly new uniform available can be viewed [here](#). Please email the [office](#) to reserve any item/s you wish to buy, ahead of making payment via ParentPay.

You will be aware of the mass testing process in schools using lateral flow tests. I do, however, need parental consent for these tests to be undertaken. These tests are self-administered and clear instructions can be found [here](#). Many of you have already given consent, but if you have not already done so, then please register your consent or lack of consent by clicking [here](#).

With safety assured, we will then be focussing on the mental health and well-being of the young people. When children returned after the last lockdown they were clearly pleased to be back with their friends and seeing their joyful faces was something that kept me and others going in the darkest of times. We will be wanting to see those smiles back on their faces and are looking forward to re-engaging with them both personally and educationally.

My own view is that children are remarkably resilient in times like this. I have little time for the media hype around 'a lost generation of schoolchildren' who will never catch up. There is nothing to suggest that those youngsters that lived through evacuation and previous lengthier battles were hampered in their educational or social development. I am genuinely far more concerned in the short-term with putting the smile back on their faces than I am about offering intense additional tuition and unwarranted pressure. That will also be the message I give to members of staff and our immediate priority will be assessing where children are emotionally, physically *and* educationally.

Whilst we are concerned about all children, we do feel especially concerned in relation to those who would have been facing public exams this summer. Once again, our priority will be their emotional health and wellbeing. We know that last year's students, whilst faced with uncertainty and prolonged absence from school, all went on successfully to appropriate destinations. We expect our current Y11 and Y13 students to do likewise and all our messages will be to reassure them rather than add on additional pressure. Every effort will be made to maximise their achievement in the summer and to ensure that all students have appropriate onward progression routes. I have every confidence in our teaching staff who I know will, once again, go above and beyond to help all those students who show a willingness to improve.

Ashchurch Road, Tewkesbury  
Gloucestershire GL20 8DF

Reception: **01684 292152**  
Attendance Line: **01684 851806**

Email: **office@tewkeshuryschool.org**  
Website: **www.tewkeshuryschool.org**

Headteacher: **Mr G M Watson** BSc PGDip NPQH

To help us to continue the process of refining our remote learning programme and to gather feedback, please can I ask you to complete a short survey relating to each child in your family. Please click [here](#). Students are being sent a separate version of this survey to complete via ClassCharts. Please encourage your child to complete this.

I will be in touch with further information in due course. Many thanks for your efforts with homeschooling and very best wishes to you and your families.

Yours faithfully



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**Headteacher**

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