



Friday 1st April 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

Headteacher's Weekly Update

As we approach the final week of this term staff absence continues to be a significant problem for us. Therefore, we will continue the cycle of asking year groups to learn from home, with Year 8 taking their turn on Monday. I am sorry for the disruption this causes.

Home Learning for Year 8 on Monday 4th & Tuesday 5th April 2022

We continue to face high levels of staff absence and as a result Year 8 are asked to learn from home at the beginning of next week.

Why have we taken this action?

We are currently experiencing much higher than usual staff absence. As many schools face similar challenges, supply agencies simply cannot provide us with additional relief staff. Given these constraints we do not have enough staff to provide supervision for all classes and therefore we cannot safely discharge our duty of care. By asking year groups to remain at home we reduce the number of classes that require supervision.

How long will these measures last?

If the situation does not improve we may need to ask Year 7 to learn from home on Wednesday and Thursday. We will make a decision and communicate it at the earliest possible opportunity.

What provision will students receive at home?

As much as possible students will have a live lesson delivered via Teams. Lessons will last for 45 minutes and supplementary work may be set. Where live lessons cannot be provided because the class teacher is absent, independent work will be set via Teams (each morning we will email parents a list of absent staff so that you are aware of the lessons that won't be live). We will not provide live lessons for PE and encourage students to find an opportunity for their own suitable physical activity.

Information regarding Teams can be accessed via these links [for students](#) and [for parents](#). If you have any queries about remote learning provision then please contact my PA, Sarah Farndon (sfarndon@emmbrook.wokingham.sch.uk).



Covid-19 Summary

From today the guidance relating to Covid-19 is radically changed. Please follow the new guidance below:

New cases	Students: Low in all year groups (rising in Year 9) Staff: High but stable
Communication	Use covid@emmbrook.wokingham.sch.uk for all Covid-19 queries.
Symptoms	If your child is feeling unwell and has a high temperature they should stay at home and avoid contact with other people.
Return to school	You child should only return to school when they no longer have a temperature and feel well enough to attend school.
If your child tests positive	Although free testing has now been withdrawn, the new guidance states that should your child test positive for Covid-19 they should stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 3 days.

Friday 8th April – 12.20pm finish

As next week is the last day of term I thought it worth reminding you that we finish at 12.20pm. WBC school buses (e.g. E1, E2, E3, etc.) have been rescheduled for the early closure, however students who use public buses will need to make alternative arrangements on that day.

Friday 8th April – Non-Uniform Day

Students may wear non-uniform next Friday to support this half-term's charity, the [Meningitis Research Foundation](#). This charity was selected to support the fundraising project of Sally Coyne, a former student now at university. We are always keen to support any member of The Emmbrook Family, including alumni.

As with the last non-uniform day, please be aware that we can only accept donations via [Scopay](#) – the minimum requested donation is £1. Students should not bring £1 with them on the day as our bank is unable to handle cash. My feeling as a parent is that it is easier to donate online than find £1 coins for my children, so I hope that is a widely shared view and I'm grateful for your support.

Exam Preparation for Year 11 and 13 Students

Year 11 have conducted themselves brilliantly during this exam week and the feedback they will receive from their teachers will be invaluable in helping them prepare for the final exams. I am sure that Year 13 students will find next week as useful when they sit internal exams.

Mr Whitehouse has written directly to make parents in those year groups aware of the Easter revision sessions that will be offered here at school over the holiday. Please encourage your children to attend as much as possible.



Support for the Ukrainian People

We continue to think of the plight of the Ukrainian people and these are good charities:

- [Oxfam Ukraine Appeal](#)
- [DEC Ukraine Appeal](#)
- [British Red Cross Ukraine Appeal](#)

If your child is being impacted by these developments please let us know (either via their tutor or Year Leader) so that we can support them.

Wokingham Youth Parliament

Jonathan Dodd in Year 12 will be standing for re-election for the Wokingham Youth Parliament. Jonathan has been fantastic in this role and we wish him every success for the elections on Wednesday 5th April.

Mrs Lloyd Appointed as Curriculum Leader for English

I am delighted to share that Mrs Lloyd has been promoted and will be our new Curriculum Leader for English upon our return from the Easter holiday. Mrs Lloyd will be well known to the school community, having joined us in 2014. I am sure that Mrs Lloyd will have a hugely positive impact on the future development of the English Department.

During two previous surges of Covid-19 a well-timed school holiday has provided a 'circuit breaker' in transmission for us. I sincerely hope that the Easter holiday will serve this purpose and that staff absence will return to more usual levels in the Summer Term.

Best wishes,

Nick McSweeney

Headteacher

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