



18 December 2020

Rachel Hutchinson  
Principal

Dear Parents/Carers

As the autumn term has come to a close, I wanted to take the opportunity to thank you for your support over the past few months, and even though life has been very different, our students have achieved so much across a range of activities. I warmly welcome you, as part of our Ivybridge Learning Community, to find some time to read the latest edition of the College Echo. This wonderful publication demonstrates the achievements of our students and current life at the College.

The Department for Education made a statement yesterday afternoon regarding a staggered return to school in January in the context of rising infection levels. From Monday, 4 January 2021, students in Years 11 and 13, along with vulnerable children and children of critical workers will return to College in person. Additionally, any Year 12 students who have external examinations at the start of January (BTEC Sport, Applied Business and ICT Technicals) should attend College on the days that they have lessons in these subjects. Superseding any previous communications from the College, all other students will remain at home for the first week and engage in remote education provided by the College. These Year Groups will return as normal from Monday, 11 January 2021.

In order to support our planning we will be asking all parents and carers of Years 7 to 10 students to complete a survey [here](#) in which we will ask you to confirm your child's return to College and whether you meet one of the Critical Worker categories. For Year 12 students who had previously been accessing College during off-site weeks, please email Mrs Street to confirm your continued attendance.

The government has also announced that from the first week in January 2021, all secondary schools will be able to test their staff and students for COVID-19. This will be a rapid COVID-19 test undertaken on the College site and we will update you on this as soon as further information is available. Given that testing for students is optional, and consent will be required from the student or parent as appropriate, we would also ask that you discuss with your child whether they would wish to be tested in January.

Once again, we would like to express our sincere thanks to all families who have been highly vigilant on ensuring that when anyone in the household has been unwell with COVID symptoms, or there has been a positive case in the household, the children have remained at home in accordance with Public Health England guidance on self-isolating. This has played a key part in the prevention of further cases.

We ask for your continued support in reminding your child of the importance of the following safety principles when the new term commences in January:

- **The wearing of face masks at all times around the College** (unless exempt).
- **Following all social distancing measures around the College.** All classes have recorded seating plans which identifies the student location in each room, and this is monitored on a weekly basis against the College's attendance records.
- **Following the one-way systems.** Face masks must remain on at all times as a preventative measure where social distancing is more challenging.

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- **The wearing of face masks on College buses at all times.** Students should remain seated in their designated 'Year Group' bubbles.

As we commence the Christmas holidays it is vital that you continue to inform the College if your child tests positive for COVID-19. In the event of any positive test result between 18 to 23 December, the College has a role to play in routine contact tracing. Please use the email [covidnotification@ivybridge.devon.sch.uk](mailto:covidnotification@ivybridge.devon.sch.uk) should you need to inform the College of a positive result during this period. From 24 December, parents/carers should follow contact tracing instructions provided by NHS Test and Trace.

**No student should return to College on Monday, 4 January if they or anyone in their household have COVID-19 symptoms or are in a period of self-isolation.**

Finally, on behalf of all the staff and governors at the College, I wish you a peaceful and restful festive holiday.

Yours faithfully

Rachel Hutchinson  
**Principal**