

5th January, 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

I am writing to update you following the government announcement last night of a new national lockdown. As of today schools in England have been ordered to close and move to online/remote learning until at least mid-February, opening only to vulnerable students and the children of critical workers. This is a rapidly changing and evolving situation and, in the first instance, I want to offer you reassurance that we are doing all we can to ensure the best possible provision is in place for all of our students. We are still awaiting further guidance and information with regard to many issues, however, this is what we can confirm today:

College Closure and Reopening

- College is now closed for most students until at least mid-February, it will remain open only to vulnerable students and young people and the children of critical workers. We will be contacting the families of all vulnerable students; the full list of those classed as a critical worker has been updated and is available on the government website – link below.
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision?utm_source=4%20January%202021%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19#critical-workers

In order to reduce transmission of the virus the government have stated that “limiting attendance is about reducing the number of contacts that all of us have with people in other households”. Therefore we need students only to be in school if there is no alternative. If you think you are a critical key worker and would like your son/daughter to attend college please email info@utcw.co.uk by the end of the week stating your current job role. If you have not already done so during the last lockdown, please also provide some evidence of your critical worker status - your work ID badge or pay slip. This will enable us to effectively plan provision and staffing in the building from next week onwards. Students who do come into the building will be expected to wear school uniform and a face mask in line with current guidelines.

- Unfortunately we do not yet know for certain when college will be able to reopen fully. We will keep you informed with any further announcements and plans to reopen.

Remote Learning

- Remote teaching provision is in place from today for students in all year groups and students will be able to work remotely from home using Microsoft Teams to access their usual timetable.
- All staff will be accessible to students and parents during normal working hours and will set work that is of equivalent length to the core teaching students would receive in school.



A SCIENCE & ENGINEERING ACADEMY
& SIXTH FORM

University Technical College Warrington,
Dallam Lane, Warrington, WA2 7NG

Telephone: 01925 737067

E-mail: info@utcw.co.uk

Website: www.utcw.co.uk

Principal & Chief Executive: Mr L M Barber

- All students will be set meaningful, ambitious work each day in a number of different subjects. Sometimes this will involve the teacher delivering new content in a live lesson that students will be expected to log into and participate in. Other lessons will involve students
- accessing high quality curriculum resources or completing and submitting independent tasks.
- Teachers will schedule their lessons each week and send out calendar invites in Microsoft Teams; we will be gauging how well students are progressing through the curriculum using questions and other suitable tasks and providing feedback.
- **Attendance to online lessons is compulsory and registers will be taken.** If your son/daughter is ill, please contact school in the usual way. Parents will be contacted via Parent Mail if students do not attend lessons.
- Please encourage your son/daughter to take responsibility for their learning throughout this time and to keep in touch daily with their teachers. If you have any concerns regarding IT or lesson access please email: info@utcw.co.uk and someone will contact you to support.

Free School Meal Provision

- We will continue to provide meal options for any students who are in college. 6th form students will not be able to leave the building to buy food during the school day.
- For those students who are eligible for benefits related free school meals who are not attending school the government has today issued guidance produced by the Lead Association for Catering in Education, please see link below:
<https://laca.co.uk/laca-view/free-school-meals-guidance-producing-food-parcels>
- In line with this guidance we will be providing food parcels which will allow parents/carers/students to prepare simple and healthy lunches at home.
- Food parcels will be provided weekly and will be available to collect from college every Tuesday morning between 8 -10am. If you are entitled to free school meals and would like collect a weekly food parcel please email info@UTCW.co.uk with your request by 9am on Friday morning.
- Extra food parcels are also available from The Warrington Food Bank, please email: warrington.foodbank.org.uk or contact a member of our pastoral team who will help you access this provision.

Examinations

- We are still awaiting further updates and guidance regarding examination arrangements in the summer for Year 11 and Year 13 students.
- As of today all that has been announced is that it will be not possible for exams to go ahead fairly this summer. The government are currently consulting with Ofqual on "an approach for alternative arrangements that will allow students to progress fairly." We await details of what this will mean for our Year 11 and Year 13 students and we will let you know as soon as we do.

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- However, at the moment examination boards are stating that the January exams taking place this week and next week **will** go ahead. There is much discussion and consultation ongoing about this and if anything changes I will let you know, but for now the arrangements for examinations and controlled assessments taking place on Thursday 7th **will** remain in place with social distancing measures in place. Please see a copy of this information below.

The following groups of students need to attend college at these specific times during the **week beginning the 4th January** to access either an external examination or controlled coursework session – **this is vitally important and not optional** – specific students will be sent calendar invites for these times.

- **Thursday 7th January: Year 11 Construction and the Built Environment Examination.** This will start at **9am** and students need to be in college for **8.30am**
- **Thursday 7th January: Year 12 and 13 L3 Btec Computing** students will need to attend a controlled assessment from **10am – 1.20pm** with Mr Gee. These times would be their normal lessons P2-4.

Testing

- We are still being asked by the government to facilitate the testing of students and staff, and are currently putting in place procedures so we can do this when students return.
- Any students or staff who access the building during the lockdown will be offered a test.
- A separate email with information about tests and consent has been sent out to all parents/carers. **Please respond to this to give your consent ASAP** if you have not done so already.

Safeguarding

- During this time students many students will be isolated and spending a lot of time online. Our first priority is always to ensure that your son/daughter is safe and our pastoral team will continue to send out advice and information regarding students' mental health and wellbeing.
- It is especially important that you are aware of what your son/daughter is being asked to do, including:
 - sites they will be asked to use
 - college staff they will interact with

Please use these resources to help keep your son/daughter safe online:

- [support for parents and carers to keep children safe online](#), which outlines resources to help keep children safe from different risks online and where to go to find support and advice

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- guidance on [staying safe online](#) which includes information on security and privacy settings
- [Thinkuknow](#) provides advice from the National Crime Agency (NCA) on staying safe online
- [Parent info](#) is a collaboration between Parentzone and the NCA providing support and guidance for parents from leading experts and organisations
- [Childnet](#) offers a toolkit to support parents and carers of children of any age to start discussions about their online life, to set boundaries around online behaviour and technology use, and to find out where to get more help and support
- [Internet matters](#) provides age-specific online safety checklists, guides on how to set parental controls on a range of devices, and a host of practical tips to help children get the most out of their digital world
- [London Grid for Learning](#) has support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online, including tips to keep primary aged children safe online
- [Net-aware](#) has support for parents and carers from the NSPCC, including a guide to social networks, apps and games
- [Let's Talk About It](#) has advice for parents and carers to keep children safe from online radicalisation
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) has tips, advice, guides and other resources to help keep children safe online, including parental controls offered by home internet providers and safety tools on social networks and other online services

Reporting Concerns

If you have any concerns about a student during the lockdown please do not hesitate to contact us directly using the following dedicated email/phone numbers:

Mrs J Chilton: Safeguarding

Email: jchilton@utcw.co.uk

Tel: 07587728163

Mr A Johnson: Pastoral Support

Email: ajohnson@utcw.co.uk

Tel: 07388638060

Mrs S Lee: SEND Coordinator

Email: slee@utcw.co.uk

Tel: 07879544531

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As a parent and a teacher, I understand that times are challenging for us all right now and I will do all I can to keep in touch with you, via letter and social media, over the coming weeks to try and keep you as updated as possible in these ever changing situations. As always, I thank you for your patience and ongoing support as we work together to ensure the best outcomes for our students.

Yours faithfully

Amanda Downing
Associate Principal
UTC Warrington

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