

16 December 2021 – Update for GC students and parents/carers

Dear all,

As 2021 draws to a close, could I once again thank all our brilliant students for their hard work and resilience through what continues to be a very difficult time. A big thank you too to all parents and carers for their incredible support. This has been an extremely difficult year for many people, but with the booster programme now well underway, I am hopeful that 2022 will see a return to some semblance of normality before too long.

There is a short video message from me which can be found [here](#) for A1 students and [here](#) for A2 students. (If parents and carers would like to watch this, it is available on our OneDrive or our website.)

Start of next term

Can I remind all students and parents and carers that the new term will start on **Wednesday, 5 January 2022**. Please check emails before the start of term in case there are further COVID-related updates announced over the two-week break.

Support over the holiday

Should students and/or parents/carers require support over the holiday period, here are some further sources of support:

- For mental health support, text 'SHOUT' to 85258 or visit kooth.com, or youngminds.org.uk
- For bereavement support, visit cruse.org.uk
- For sexual health support, visit locala.org.uk/services/sexual-health
- For eating and nutritional support, visit beateatingdisorders.org.uk.

COVID-19 updates

Testing

The Department for Education guidelines currently state that sixth form students should take one LFD test at home either the evening or morning before they return to College in January. They should then continue to test in line with government guidelines. Students may pick up additional test kits from the main entrance (near the visitors' seating area).

Isolation

A new national approach to daily testing for contacts of COVID-19 was introduced on Tuesday. All adults who are fully vaccinated and young people aged between five and 18 years-and-six-months, identified as a contact of someone with COVID-19 – whether Omicron or not – should take a LFD test every day for seven days instead of self-isolating. However,

anyone over the age of 18 years-and-six-months who is not vaccinated must isolate in line with government guidelines if they are a close contact of a positive case.

Latest COVID-19 figures

Week ending 17 December 2021	Total
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of students with confirmed COVID-19	22
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of students self-isolating	55
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of staff with confirmed COVID-19	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of staff self-isolating	1

Drama production

Due to continued uncertainty surrounding the new Omicron variant, we have decided to move the dates of our forthcoming Drama production from January to April 2022:

- Tuesday, 5 April, 6:30 pm
- Wednesday, 6 April, 2.00 pm
- Wednesday, 6 April, 6:30 pm
- Thursday, 7 April, 6:30pm

End of A2 teaching (A2 students only)

Please be aware that the last day of teaching for our A2 students will be **Friday, 20 May 2022**.

As this will be my last newsletter of 2021, could I wish you all a very happy Christmas and a peaceful and safe 2022.

Very best wishes to you and your families,

Simon