



11 December 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

**General update – Covid-19 including Christmas reporting arrangements, Online lessons for Year 10 and 12, Christmas Jumper Day – 17 December, End of term reports, Free School Meals during the Christmas holidays, Sixth form admissions interviews, E-Platform digital library, Subject Champions Celebration - 16 December, PE curriculum time, PE extra-curricular offer, Final push – foodbank collection**

I hope my weekly letter finds you well at the end of the penultimate week of term. And what a term it has been so far....

### **Covid-19 including Christmas reporting arrangements**

As I write, the infection rate in North Kesteven has risen whilst the national average has stabilised. When I last wrote to you, there were 207 cases per 100,000 people. It now stands at 264 cases. The national average is 131 which is around the same as last week, so we are still above national by a good margin. The infection rate in Lincoln has remained stubbornly high. This now stands at 402 cases per 100,000. The last time I wrote it stood at 372.

The wished for good luck I spoke of last week has not materialised and, regrettably, the Year 10 bubble has been closed until after the Christmas break. A deep clean has now taken place and we go again in January. In the meantime, Teams lessons are underway for affected classes up until 17 December.

In relation to Covid-19, I have 'squeezed every last drop of juice out of the orange' this term; masks were introduced much earlier than in the national guidance; deep cleaning is taking place daily; our one way systems have been tweaked and refined to gain the most traction and improve safety for all on site and our classrooms controls are routine.

In addition, all staff briefings are online or have been cancelled, all staff meetings have gone virtual and visitors have only been allowed on to the campus if they have met all of the requirements of our wide-ranging risk assessment. However, community transmission is not coming down and this is a concern. The hope remains that the Christmas festivities and the five day relaxation over this period do not cause another uptick in cases but I fear this will be the case. With this in mind, I urge a level of caution as you meet with your loved ones and relatives.

I am aware some local schools are trying to make arrangements for the end of term which 'sail a little close to the wind' in terms of following the regulations we are beholden to. We will not

be doing that. However, if any parents wish to write to me via the Covid email address below, I will consider each request to isolate prior to the Christmas break on a case by case basis.

I also enclose a grid which offers advice as to how and when to contact us over the Christmas holiday should you become aware of a positive test result in the family. I would appreciate your support with this so that I can fulfil my legal obligations in relation to track and trace.

If any parents have any other concerns related to Covid-19 in school, please contact us at the Academy using the email address [COVID@srpa.co.uk](mailto:COVID@srpa.co.uk). This will make it directly to me where I will be able to help and will do my best to prioritise your concern.

### **Online lessons for Years 10 and 12**

I want to take the time to congratulate all students in these year groups for their continued commitment to learning online with their teachers. We have seen very high engagement, which is very pleasing to see so close to Christmas.

### **Christmas Jumper Day – 17 December**

On the last day of term, we will be holding a Christmas jumper day to raise money for our five House charities. We will be collecting £1 on the day which can be given to your child's R2L tutor. Please do not feel the need to shop for a new jumper if your child doesn't own one. Wear a green or red jumper instead or just one of your own over your usual shirt and trousers. No ties or blazers needed on that day.

### **End of term reports**

We will be publishing reports for all year groups except Year 11 prior to the Christmas break. Year 11 will follow shortly after Christmas to include reference to the mock examination period which is yet to conclude. All reports will be available through your Go4Schools account in the usual manner.

### **Free School Meals during the Christmas holidays**

We have now received confirmation of our allocation for the government Covid Winter Food Grant. We will be sending out details of how to access this in the coming days.

### **Sixth form admissions interviews**

All Year 11 students and external candidates will receive an invitation to an interview over the next three school weeks beginning next week and leading into January. Mr Griffiths and Mr



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Parkinson will lead on this. Primarily, interviews will take place on a Wednesday during school time but keep an eye out for your appointment over the next few days.

### **EPlatform digital library**

As part of growing our library, particularly during these trying times, the Academy has broadened our library provision to now include eBooks. Our online library can be found here: <https://srpa.eplatform.co/> and will be going 'live' at the beginning of the spring term.

Students will receive login details to allow them to browse, borrow and read books online through a browser. This is perfect for any KS3 students wishing to engage with their reading homework in English or just for enjoyment. Students can also access this via the app available on Android, Apple and Microsoft by accessing the app and then searching for our Academy before logging in.

With a mix of classic fiction and some more contemporary books available on ePlatform, there should be a variety to appeal to all. Don't forget that students can still make use of the library itself by using the Library booking system to request books or visit the library on their bubble day during social times or before the Academy day starts at Rise and Read.

### **Subject Champions Celebration – 16 December**

We are delighted to finally get this initiative off the ground. We have many youngsters to congratulate for their nomination. Subject Champions get to show their passion for a subject, support with clubs and activities and fly the flag around the Academy for their chosen subject. We look forward to welcoming them to a socially distanced celebration event next week.

### **PE curriculum time**

When we return to the Academy after the Christmas break we plan to re-introduce more activities alongside those that are currently being delivered.

We will continue to offer table tennis, badminton, fitness and gymnastics following the safety measures we have in place. In addition, we will be introducing football, netball, handball and touch rugby. As we have done with the activities we have covered so far, we will be taking measures to ensure we are following the guidelines from the government, each individual sport's governing body and our own risk assessment. These measures include: making sure that there is no sharing of bibs and that they are washed after each use; continuing to check that students are sanitising their hands before and after each lesson; regularly sanitising the balls being used and swapping regularly; and, we will be reinforcing distancing within warm-ups, drills, discussion and cool-downs.



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Your child's PE teacher will discuss the activities being covered with their group. You can also find this information on the subject curriculum section of the academy website. Football boots will be required for football and rugby and shin pads will be required for football. As we are not yet moving to contact rugby, gum shields are not essential but can obviously still be worn.

PE kit guidance can be found here: <https://www.srpa.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/PE-kit-info-updated2.pdf>

### PE extra-curricular offer

We are delighted that we can now look to re-introduce after-school activities from January. These activities will finish at 4.15pm.

Students will be kept within their own year group and the safety measures discussed above will be adhered to for all activities. Signing up for these clubs is essential so we can monitor numbers and ensure that our safety measures are followed. Students will be able to register their interest for these clubs on their VLE home page. As numbers will be limited, students will be informed during the first week of term which clubs they have successfully been signed up for. All clubs will begin during the week of 11 January. If clubs are over-subscribed, we will offer additional opportunities after February half-term.

The clubs on offer from January are detailed below:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Lunch-time	Y8 badminton Y7 table tennis	Y7 badminton Y9 table tennis	Y10 badminton Y11 table tennis	Y9 badminton Y8 table tennis	Y11 badminton Y10 table tennis
After-school	Y11 football	Y7 netball	Y7 football Y9 football	Y8 football Y10 football Y8 netball	

Students should register their interest for any club they wish to attend for their own year group.

### Final push – foodbank collection

Any last items for our foodbank collection would be gratefully received. Students can bring them to the main hall any morning before we break up.



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This week has been a test of my resolve. I have received many enquiries about arrangements prior to Christmas and have also taken some ferocious criticism in some circles related to my inability (or unwillingness if you listen to the critics) to close the Academy prior to Christmas. Despite usually being able to call on my 'academy freedoms' to act as needed, these freedoms have been removed in relation to Covid-19. The Coronavirus Act 2020 limits my powers to enact local decision-making quite considerably. With this in mind, I will continue to make the Academy as safe as I can, given that the government edict is that we must not close early for Christmas. However, given some overt hostility of late, I feel obliged to quote my fellow Granthamian, Margaret Thatcher, for the second time in only a few weeks: "I am still at the crease, though the bowling has been pretty hostile of late. And in case anyone doubted it, can I assure you there will be no ducking the bouncers."

As an avid cricketer, I couldn't have put it better myself ma'am.

Have a lovely weekend when it comes.

I will write again soon.

Yours faithfully



**Mr D Hardy**  
**Head Teacher**



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