



Notley High School & Braintree Sixth Form



Executive Headteacher and CEO of NEMAT: Rob James

26 March 2021

Dear Year11 Parents/Carers and Students

Reopening school and being able to welcome students back has resulted in a really positive end to quite a challenging term. It is safe to say we have all learnt to live in a different world, which will no doubt be with us for some time. Once again, thank you for the support you have provided to the school since returning from lockdown.

Most students have adjusted positively to returning to routines, but some students have found the expectations difficult. We would again ask for your support to reinforce our expectations, particularly linked to the use of mobile phones, uniform and behaviour, both in and out of the classroom. Some reminders of the expectations include:

- After Easter, all students will be expected to wear full school uniform (unless they have PE on that day). Only plain black jumpers should be worn (no black hoodies with uniform);
- Students will be expected to be outside at break and lunch so please ensure they have coats with them on cooler days;
- Students should not be wearing nose piercings and if they come to school wearing one they will be asked to remove it. They are able to wear one piercing in each ear lobe only, in line with the Uniform Policy;
- Students should not be using phones in school. If they are seen, they will continue to be confiscated;
- Students must arrive on time for school and also to lessons. Those arriving late with no valid reason may be set a lunchtime detention.

All of this information has been discussed with students today via tutors and they will be reminded of this when we return for the Summer term. If you have any questions about the above, then please email your child's tutor in the first instance.

The behaviour expectations also extend to the journeys students make to and from school. Unfortunately, we have received complaints from residents in the local community who have reported poor behaviour, including rudeness to members of the public, damage to property, and general anti-social behaviour. We continually work with students to highlight the importance of their role in the local community and the impact a few young people have, which reflect on the majority. Please talk to your children about their actions, especially to maintain social distancing to keep everyone safe.

The mass COVID-19 testing programme was successful, with over 4000 lateral flow tests completed. All of which were negative. Home testing kits have been distributed and we encourage testing to continue over the Easter holiday. Students need to undertake two tests a week on a Tuesday and Thursday and log them on Testregister. If a student tests positively on a LFD test or a PCR test please email enquiries@notleyhigh.com

We are aware students have missed taking part in extra-curricular activities and the benefits they gain from this. We hope to start several after school clubs in the Summer term, which will be organised in 'year group bubbles'. Further details will be issued as soon as possible.

"Working together, achieving together"

Notley High School & Braintree Sixth Form, Notley Road, Braintree, Essex CM7 1WY

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As normal at the end of term there are staff changes. We are saying goodbye to Mr Crozier who is retiring from his role as Senior Science Technician, after working at the school for nearly 40 years. Mrs Hasmujaj, who has worked with governors and school leaders in NEMAT schools since 2015, is leaving for a new role. We wish them both well for their futures.

Since returning to school, staff have adapted their lessons to ensure students have reviewed the work covered during remote learning and are able to move forward in their learning. A key focus is assessment grades for Year 11 and Year 13 students to replace GCSE, A Level and vocational examinations. On Wednesday 19 May 2021, lessons will be delivered remotely for all students to allow staff to work with other schools to moderate these grades. Further details will be issued after Easter.

We informed you several months ago about the potential merger of the NEMAT academies with the Bridge Academy Trust. At the moment, this is planned to take place on 1 April 2021, and further details about the merger will be shared with you after Easter.

Although we have not yet received the final guidance from the exam boards and JCQ and we are expecting it to be published before 31 March 2021, we felt that it was important to contact you before the end of term.

Until we receive this key information, we are not in a position to share our finalised approach to students' *Assessments Grades* (AGs). However, please be reassured that we have been formulating plans based on the draft guidance which are still flexible to respond to any last-minute changes. We have been mindful of student wellbeing and are trying to avoid adding unnecessarily to the pressures they are under at the moment by creating an evidence gathering approach which is optimistic, holistic and stress free. We will be using a combination of historic (pre-Summer term) and recent (post-Summer term) evidence to support an assessment grade which is a fair representation of students' ability, whilst reducing a negative impact from school closure and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Although the following plans may change, we felt it was important to share some of the key principles underpinning our approach:

- All evidence gathering/assessments will take place in lesson time;
- There is an assessment schedule in both Year 1, so that there will be no more than 2-3 tests per day;
- Students and parents/carers will be given advance notice of all tests so that they can prepare appropriately;
- Teachers will share marks but will not discuss what this may mean in terms of final grades and no grades will be given either for individual pieces of work or overall;
- There will be an extensive internal and external moderation process which will ensure that the marks are accurate and fair.

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Assessment Schedule:

Monday	Maths & Option B
Tuesday	English & Option A (& Triple Science Classes)
Wednesday	Science & Option C
Thursday	Maths & Option D
Friday	English & Science

In order to support Year 11 students in their preparation, we have created an assessment calendar (attached) which covers the first two weeks back after the Easter holidays. We have included a brief summary of the topic(s) to be covered, please speak to your teacher directly for more information.

Finally, we are proposing that the final day of school for Year 11 students will be Friday 11 June 2021, to maximise the time to gather evidence and to plan for possible COVID-19 related absences. This may change to a slightly earlier date if we have been able to gather all the evidence needed, but we will be in touch and inform you of any changes.

Yours faithfully

Mr R James
CEO/Executive Headteacher

Dr C Cusick
Head of School

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