

Dear Parents and Carers

Happy new year. Welcome to the first update of 2024 in what has already been a busy first few weeks of the Spring term!

A reminder of our new email addresses for Years 7-11

In our efforts to ensure communication between families and school is effective we would like to share a new communication protocol with families. When contacting school for the **first time** with information, a question, or a concern we would like families to use the following email addresses. Please note for all attendance related issues please continue to use attendance@taptonschool.co.uk

Year Group	Email Address
Year 7	year7@taptonschool.co.uk
Year 8	year8@taptonschool.co.uk
Year 9	year9@taptonschool.co.uk
Year 10	year10@taptonschool.co.uk
Year 11	year11@taptonschool.co.uk

Electronic Devices

Please see below a reminder of our electronic devices policy. Students have responded maturely to the amendment in our policy and it is delightful to see our school community engaging positively with one another at breaks and lunchtimes without the influence of electronic devices. We thank all our students and families for their support.

*'Mobile phones, smart watches, tablets and other electronic devices such as earphones and wireless earphones are not allowed to be visible on the school site at any time. This means from the moment students enter the site to the moment they leave the site they cannot have a visible device; **this also includes at break and at lunchtime.** If students choose to bring devices to school, they must put them into school bags before entry onto the site so they are not at all visible or accessible. Students cannot place devices in pockets. This policy extends to earphone cables hanging from shirts and from pockets and headphones worn around necks. Any student found with a prohibited device will have it confiscated without discussion. First confiscations will go to the school office and can be collected at the end of the school day, all subsequent confiscations will be locked in the school safe and only returned following a meeting with parents and carers.'*

Year 11 and Year 13 Trial Exams

Year 11 Trial Exam series will commence on Tuesday 20th February with Year 13 exams beginning on Wednesday 31st January. The trial examinations will take place in the Hall and New Hall under examination conditions. Students have received subject guidance and their timetables in order to aid their revision and preparation.

We would like to invite you to our GCSE Exam Information evening on Thursday 1st February at 6pm in the school hall. Ms Grewal, Deputy Headteacher, Mrs Morris, Assistant Headteacher and Mrs Zubrot, Exams Manager will detail key information about the trial and final examinations and revision techniques. We will also be able to provide families with a provisional final timetable for the summer. As this is the last formal presentation evening for Year 11, we look forward to seeing as many of our parents and carers as possible.

Revision

Please be aware that there is a revision section on the Learning Platform for all students to access. This area is being gradually populated with more and more materials including explanations of revision strategies, tips and reference materials. It is an incredibly useful resource for your child in preparation for the assessment weeks, mock exams and indeed final examinations.

Being Prepared for the Cold Weather

The weather so far this half term has proved to be particularly cold with the forecast for more of the same. Therefore, please can we urge you to encourage your children to dress appropriately for the season. We often see students arriving for school without adequate winter clothing. It's really important to layer up at this time of year. Students can always wear the Tapton fleece or a plain black fleece in lessons.

Back to School Advice from the UK Health Security Agency

Please see the advice from the UKHSA below:

Parents are urged to take simple steps to give their children the best start to the new school term and protect their communities following the Christmas break.

As levels of winter illnesses including flu, COVID-19 and norovirus continue to rise, the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) is reminding parents of 5 simple steps they can take to reduce viruses spreading in the community – helping their children make a healthy start to the year and minimising the impact of illness on attendance as schools head back and parents return to work.

Teach good hygiene habits

Encouraging good hand-washing habits is one of the most effective ways to stop the spread. Regularly wash hands in soap and warm water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser when convenient. Using a tissue to catch coughs and sneezes, binning it and then washing hands will help prevent infection from spreading. Our [e-bug](#) resources for all ages can help you to explain and discuss hygiene habits – and why they are important – to your child or teenager.

Stopping the spread of stomach bugs

Along with rising cases of norovirus, UKHSA has also been seeing higher levels of other gastrointestinal infections, such as Shiga toxin-producing E.coli.

If you or your child have diarrhoea and vomiting, washing your hands with soap and warm water and using bleach-based products to clean surfaces will help stop infections from spreading. Don't prepare food for others if you have symptoms or for 48 hours after symptoms stop.

If you are unwell, you should avoid visiting people in hospitals and care homes to avoid passing on the infection to those more vulnerable in these settings. Do not return to work, school or nursery until 48 hours after your symptoms have stopped.

Spot the signs of when to keep your child at home

While children are encouraged to stay in education or childcare with symptoms such as a runny nose, sore throat or slight cough (if otherwise well and do not have a high temperature), children should stay home from school or nursery if they're displaying the following symptoms:

If your child has a fever and is unwell, they should stay home from school or nursery until the fever has passed and they are well enough to attend.

If your child has diarrhoea and/or vomiting, they should stay off school or nursery for at least 48 hours after their symptoms clear up – this will help stop the spread of stomach bugs.

At this time of year, other types of illnesses that circulate are scarlet fever and chickenpox, as cases usually peak in late winter and early spring.

Symptoms of [scarlet fever](#) include sore throat, fever, swollen neck glands, a bumpy rash on the tummy, flushed cheeks and 'strawberry tongue'. If you suspect your child has scarlet fever, contact your local GP; and if diagnosed stay away from nursery or school for 24 hours after the first dose of antibiotics.

Chickenpox is highly contagious, with the most common symptom being an itchy, spotty rash. If your child has [chickenpox](#), keep them off school until all the spots have crusted over.

Get vaccinated

Vaccination offers the best protection against flu and is given as a quick and painless nasal spray for children. However, vaccine uptake amongst pre-school children is one of the lowest, despite the illness being more serious for this ages group in some cases.

Children eligible for the flu vaccine include:

- children aged 2 to 3 years old on 31 August in 2023
- all primary school-aged children (reception to year 6)
- secondary school-aged children (year 7 to year 11)
- children aged 6 months and older with long-term health conditions

Similar to the flu vaccine, there has been a drop in uptake of routine childhood immunisations, which protect children against diseases such as measles, mumps, rubella, diphtheria and polio. You can take a look at the [childhood vaccination schedule](#) to make sure your child is up to date with all their vaccinations.

Use NHS resources

NHS UK provides easily accessible guidance for parents to [help manage winter illness at home](#).

Dr Catherine Falconer, Deputy Director Health Equity and Inclusion Health at UKHSA, said:

“The winter period can see an increase in some of the common seasonal viruses which disrupt children’s education and cause more serious illnesses. As children head back to school, there are steps parents and families can take to keep a household healthy this January whilst also preventing infections from spreading when children are poorly. By following this guidance, parents are also protecting the wider community.”

Please be mindful that a level of self-care and resilience are also necessary. A cough, a cold, a headache or stomach-ache can usually be self-managed with over-the-counter medicines which can help alleviate many of these symptoms and allow students to continue with their school day. Building resilience is an essential life lesson; consistently high school attendance is so important in achieving well.

Allergies

We have a number of students in school with allergies to various nuts. These can provoke reactions and, in some cases, cause anaphylaxis. Wherever possible, please avoid sending your child to school with nuts for lunchtime or breaktime snacks. We appreciate your support with this.

Pre-loved uniform

At Tapton we offer a pre-loved uniform service. The service is open to all parents and carers of Tapton students. If you would like to request any uniform please email: prelovedschooluniform@taptonschool.co.uk stating the student’s name, items required and contact name and number. A member of the uniform team will then contact you to discuss sizing as needed and confirm how items are to be collected. This would normally be by the student at the end of the day. We also have a small number of Tapton Fleeces as part of this.

We do ask for a small donation to cover the cost of washing of 50p/£1 per item, however, this is a voluntary donation.

Lost property

We have a significant amount of lost property items which remain unclaimed. The items are not labelled so it has been incredibly difficult to identify the owners. We particularly have a large number of coats and jackets as we move into the colder months.

If your child has lost their coat or item of uniform, please ask them to come to reception during breaks, or before/after school to try to collect these. This should not be done during lesson time.

To help with future lost property please can you ensure you child's name is written in their uniform, especially coats and jumpers. This will make it much easier to return items to them if lost.

Additionally, due to limited storage space any unclaimed and unlabelled items we have had for 2 weeks will be donated to charity.

School Car Park

The car park continues to be an issue that causes concern. Every day we have pre-arranged transport arriving on site for students requiring additional access and community transport for our vision support students. There are already insufficient car park spaces for school staff, therefore, when parents and carers arrive on site this poses a significant challenge and a real risk to safety. We are therefore, once again, reminding families that the car park cannot be accessed at the start and at the end of the school day. If you are dropping off or collecting your child or children please use one of the roads near to the school site whilst being considerate to residents. If you have any questions about this please contact enquiries@taptonschool.co.uk

Mental Health and Well-being

Mental health and wellbeing continue to be a focus for all and affects so many in a myriad of ways. This is a very varied and complex area and there are no quick-fix solutions. However, maintaining regular routines wherever possible, such as, attending school and lessons whilst managing mental health is key.

You can find out more on our Mental Health and Wellbeing website ([Tapton Mental Health and Wellbeing - Home \(taptonschool.co.uk\)](http://TaptonMentalHealthandWellbeing-Home.taptonschool.co.uk)) offers information, support and guidance about staff and student mental health.

If your child has been referred to an agency for support by their GP, we would be happy to work and liaise with them to offer continuity, please do let us know if this is the case.

Personal Development

This half term all students in Key Stage Three will be looking at a variety of different topics. In Year 7 students will be studying puberty and FGM. Year 8 students will be completing their First Give Programme and one class will win a £1000 for their chosen charity. They will also be looking at criminal exploitation and gang violence. In Year 9 students will spend the half term studying Relationships and Sex education. This will include subjects such as grooming, different types of contraception, safe sex and pregnancy. At Key Stage Four, Year 10 students will be working on gaining meaningful work experience which will be starting on July 1st 2024 and Year 11 will be continuing to focus on destinations after their GCSEs and making an application via Sheffield Progress. Year 10 will also have a Personal Development day on 26th January where they will be studying drug, alcohol and addictive behaviour and have an assembly from The Corner on vaping.

As a whole school we are looking forward to celebrating Chinese New Year on 10th February. This year is the year of the Dragon and there will be assemblies and other activities happening towards the end of the term.

If you have any questions about any of this or have an emerging topic or issue you are concerned about and feel we need to address in Personal Development lessons please contact Mr Sabbagh via email dsabbagh@taptonschool.co.uk.

Student Council

As the student council, we are currently working on ensuring that school is a place where each and every student feels safe and heard. We are devising a range of methods to deal with and hopefully reduce the issue of bullying both in school and out of school. We have put together assemblies and questionnaires to bring attention to this issue and encourage students to report any instances of bullying they have witnessed or experienced. A key initiative we have implemented is the Peer-to-Peer support room which is a space where all students are able to approach members of the Student Council to talk about any concerns they may have and receive the necessary support or be directed to other resources that can help them. We have also held meetings with our form representatives from each year group and collected feedback from the student body, which we will present to SLT in order to bring about changes to improve the school environment.

Ropa

Year 8 Subject Choices

Year 8 students are currently in the process of choosing their Subject Choices in preparation for Year 9 study. The presentation that was shared with families on 5th January is available to view on the school website. Students will choose two options from Art, Music, Drama, Textiles, Food, Computer Science, Product Design and Engineering. They will study these subjects for two hours per week throughout Year 9. The Subject Choices booklet will be available on Satchel:One and MCAS alongside the Subject Choices form from Friday 27th January. The deadline for the form is Friday 10th February 2023.

If you were able to attend the Subject Choices Information Evening, we would be grateful if you could complete the survey by scanning the QR code.



Year 9 GCSEs

Our Year 9 GCSE Options process has begun. This is the process in which students select which subjects they will continue to study at GCSE. We have calendared a number of important events to guide and support your child through the process. Following on from our Year 9 GCSE Information Evening on Thursday 5th January, students will also have the opportunity to find out more about GCSE and Vocational courses in their lessons during GCSE Options week, which commences on the 30th January. As part of the GCSE Options week, students will have the opportunity to have taster sessions in subjects that they have not studied lower down the school and the chance to discuss their potential Post-16 pathways too. The Options booklet and choice form will be issued on Friday 27th

January and needs to be completed and returned to school by Friday 10th February. The deadline for the form is Friday 10th February 2023. If you were able to attend the Options Information Evening, we would be grateful if you could complete the survey by scanning the QR code.



Sixth Form Update

We have returned from the Christmas break to a very busy half term for Sixth Formers. We had broken up on a high after the excitement and fun of Charity Week. The students had chosen to raise money for Roundabout, Young Women's Housing Project and Medicine Without Frontiers. Highlights included a mass Just Dance and a Christmas Quiz. Along with this, students came in fancy dress each day – this was a great way to end the term.

Our Year 12 students have just finished their assessment period which will support their subject decisions going forward to Year 13. We have Year 12 Progress Evening on Wednesday 7th February - with appointments now open.

Year 13 are preparing for their Trial Exams in February; students have already received their subject specific guidance and timetables.

We have had another bumper year of UCAS applications, submitting around 200 applications to a wide range of courses and institutions. We are always proud of the breadth of courses our students go on to and wish them all the best as they await offers of places. Meanwhile, our Year 12s will be attending the UK Universities and Apprenticeships Fair in mid-March.

In tandem with focusing on supporting our Year 13s and Year 12s destinations, we are going through the hundreds of applications we receive for students wanting to join us in Sixth Form. We are pleased to have had applications submitted to us from across the city and beyond.

Music

Tapton Music January 2024

Happy New Year! Thank you to all who came and supported our two Christmas Concerts – it was lovely to see so many people there. A huge well done to all of our performers, the standard was extremely high. We are also proud that we managed to raise £300 for the Archer Project at our Ranmoor Concert. Thank you for your kind donations.

We have already been busy in the department this term with our first ever concert as part of our new Alumni Concert Series. We welcomed one of our former pupils, Alex Barron, and his quartet, Rosamund Brass from the Royal Northern College of Music. They delivered a fantastic and insightful workshop with our A-Level music students in the afternoon, performing some of the pupil compositions and giving some performing advice and feedback. It was also great for our pupils to hear firsthand about life at music college. The afternoon finished with a wonderful free concert open to the public.

We also had our first open choir and cake rehearsal with lots of new pupils and staff giving choir a go (Wednesday lunchtimes). It is never too late for pupils to join any of our ensembles – all of the details are in the music department.

Our next concert is the Senior Leaver's Concert on Tuesday 19th March. This is a wonderful concert featuring solos from our Y13 pupils and senior ensembles. Tickets will be going on sale closer to the time – keep your eyes peeled for more information.

Mrs G Page
Subject Leader for Music
Gpage@taptonschool.co.uk

PE

Please can I remind students and parents and carers that jewellery is not allowed in PE lessons. If students do come to school with jewellery on it is imperative they can remove it quickly themselves and can store it in their bag during the lesson. This included nose piercings. If students have their ears pierced in the last 6 weeks they must bring their own tape to cover the piercings.

We have had so many students attend extra-curricular clubs so far this year and would love to see anyone who hasn't come to anything yet give it something a go! Please see the programme below for more information.

Headteacher Drop-in

The next Headteacher Drop-in will take place on Thursday 8th February between 3.45 and 4.45 with the last slot being 4.30. This is your opportunity to meet with Ms Rhodes, Headteacher and Ms Grewal, Deputy Headteacher, to talk through a specific question or concern. If you wish to use the Drop-in please arrive in school reception between 3.45 and 4.45. We look forward to seeing you.

The next Tapton Update will be available on Friday 8th March 2024.

Thank you for your continued support of our school.

Tapton School

Upcoming dates for your diary

26/01/24	Y10 Personal Development Day
29/01/24	Y8 Subject choices and Y9 Options Y11 Mock Orals
31/01/24	External UCAS Deadline 6pm UKMT Maths challenge Y9-11
01/02/24	A-Level Art exam begins Y11 GCSE Information Evening 6pm-7pm
02/02/24	Y9 Options Morning
05/02/24	AS Level Options Deadline
06/02/24	Safer Internet day A Level drama exam
07/02/24	Year 12 Progress Evening
09/02/24	Year 8 Subject choices/Y9 Options deadline School closes for half term 3.30
19/02/24	School reopens
27/02/24	GCSE Drama exams rehearsal
05/03/24	External Applicants Consultation Evening 4-7pm
06/03/24	Year 7 Progress Evening
07/03/24	Attendance day Y12 Religious Studies trip to York
08/03/24	International Women's day
10/03/24	Ramadan Begins
11/03/24	A Level Music recitals
14/03/24	A level Music recitals
18/03/24	GCSE Art and Textiles Exam Week A-Level CI performance exam TBC
19/03/24	Senior Leavers Music Concert
21/03/24	UK University and Apprenticeship Fair Maths challenge
25/03/24	Y12 Geography Field Trip to Lake District until Wednesday 4pm
28/03/24	Y11 Personal Development Day School closes for Easter holiday 3.30

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Before school 8-8.50am	<p>Y7-13 girls' Football (Miss Risby/Miss Meaden)</p> <p>Y10 – 11 boys' Basketball (Mr Kelly)</p> <p>Team Trampolining (Mrs Becks) (invite only)</p>	<p>Y7-13 Hockey (Miss Risby/Miss Meaden)</p> <p>Y7 Badminton (Mrs Goodhead)</p> <p>Elite Basketball Invite only (Mr Kelly)</p> <p>Y8 boys' Football (Mr Dunbar) (KES astro)</p>	<p>Y9 boys' Football (Mr Dunbar)</p> <p>Y7 boys' Basketball (Mr Kelly)</p> <p>Y9-13 Netball (Mrs Wilson)</p> <p>Y10 boys' football (Mr Hooper) (KES Astro)</p>	<p>Y12-13 Football (Mr Johnson)</p> <p>Y10-13 Badminton (Mrs Goodhead)</p> <p>Y7-8 Netball (Mrs Wilson)</p>	<p>Y7-13 Clubercise (Miss Meaden)</p> <p>Y11 boys' Football (Mr Hooper)</p> <p>Team Badminton Invite only (Mrs Goodhead)</p>
Lunch 12:50-1.20pm	<p>Y7-13 Multi-sports (invite only) (Mr Dunbar/Mrs Goodhead)</p> <p>Y10-13 Table tennis (Mr Lunn)</p> <p>Y12-13 A level intervention (Mr Hooper)</p>	<p>Y8-9 Badminton (Mrs Goodhead)</p> <p>Y7-9 table tennis (Mr Hooper)</p> <p>VS Sports Club (new hall) (Miss Phipps)</p> <p>GCSE intervention (Miss Meaden/ Mr Dunbar)</p>	<p>Y7 Badminton (Mrs Goodhead)</p> <p>Y7-13 Girls Basketball (Mr Kelly)</p>	<p>Y10-11 GCSE Badminton (Mrs Goodhead)</p> <p>Y7-9 Table tennis (Mr Dunbar)</p>	<p>Y7 girls' Basketball (Mr Kelly)</p> <p>Y10-13 Table tennis (Mr Dunbar)</p>
After school 3.30-4.30pm (Climbing until 6pm)	<p>Y8-9 Badminton (Mrs Goodhead)</p> <p>Y7-13 Trampolining (Must sign up) (Mrs Becks)</p> <p>Climbing club (Must sign up) (Mr Lunn)</p>	<p>Y8-9 girls' Basketball (Mr Kelly)</p>	<p>Y10-13 girls' Basketball (Mr Kelly)</p>	<p>Y7 boys' Football (Mr Khan)</p> <p>Y8-9 boys' Basketball (Mr Kelly)</p>	