

Dear Parents and Carers

It has been wonderful to welcome all our students back into school this term. We always start the term with a 'We are Tapton' assembly; the theme for our first assembly in January was 'Progress not Perfection'. Ms Rhodes and Ms Grewal shared their experiences of struggling with ideas of perfection and strategies to make progress. We have had lots of positive feedback on this assembly and wanted to share this message with you.

During the first week of the term once again our school hall was repurposed as a testing centre. A group of ex-students ably stepped in to facilitate the testing of Year 7-13 in order to ensure face to face teaching can continue. Safety of our students and staff continues to be of paramount importance and we will continue to adhere to our COVID secure procedures such as providing hand sanitiser on arrival to school and throughout the day and ensuring good ventilation in classrooms and indeed throughout the building.

Face Coverings

As you have no doubt read in the news, the government have announced that from Thursday 20th January 2022 face coverings are no longer recommended in classrooms and teaching spaces for staff and students in Year 7 and above.

At Tapton we will continue to proceed with caution and follow the principle of the 4 Es which have been adjusted below:
Expect we will expect secondary students and all adults to wear a face covering in corridors and communal areas (not classrooms).

Encourage we will encourage each other to take responsibility for our own personal safety and to make the right choice to ensure we all feel safe and cared for. If children and staff members still chose to wear a mask (including in a classroom) we will allow this personal decision.

Educate everyone will learn why, how and when it is appropriate to wear a face covering.

Enable we will provide a face covering for any student who wishes to have one but doesn't yet have their own.

We will continue to monitor cases within the school and provide a further update in due course. Please ensure your child brings a mask to school so they can wear it in all communal spaces. Please also remember that the masks we have in school are of the disposable, single-use variety and of limited supply therefore whilst we will support students who arrive to school without a mask it is better for the environment if they have a reusable one of their own.

Punctuality to School

Tapton School has one of the latest start times of any school in the city. We expect students to be ready to enter the building from 9am and to registration by 9.15am. On a few occasions we have had parents and carers contact school asking for leeway due to traffic issues. Whilst we know bad traffic can be frustrating we have a responsibility to have the highest expectations of our students and therefore students who arrive after 9.15 will still receive a same day lunchtime detention.

School Uniform Policy

The government have recently introduced guidance for schools around school uniform. The guidance clearly supports the role school uniform plays in:

- promoting the ethos of a school
- providing a sense of belonging and identity
- setting an appropriate tone for education

We have already reviewed our uniform policy in light of COVID-19 and this has been ratified by our governing body. In light of the recent guidance, however, we will be engaging in a further consultation with families to ensure our uniform acts as a social leveller and does not disadvantage or exclude any groups. Our updated draft policy will be sent out to families alongside the Tapton Update. If you have any contributions to make with regards to how we can best address the objectives of social levelling and reducing disadvantage please email hgrewal@taptonschool.co.uk. The deadline for contributions is Monday 7th February 2022.

Part of the statutory guidance for schools is to ensure there are supplies of second-hand uniform for families who wish to access it. From Monday 31st January 2022 we will be launching our pre-loved uniform programme which is open to all families. Depending on availability, we hope to be able to offer one sweatshirt and two polo shirts to students. PE uniform will be issued as and when it is available. Families will be asked for a small voluntary donation of between 50p to a £1 to cover washing and packaging etc. Parents and carers can email: prelovedschooluniform@taptonschool.co.uk stating student name, items required and a contact name and number. A member of the uniform team will contact families to discuss sizes, availability etc.

We have a uniform donation box located in the visitor reception area if any families wish to donate good quality, clean uniform items. We are currently taking donations for Tapton logoed sweatshirts, polo shirts, trousers, skirts and PE hoodies.

Being Prepared for the Cold Weather

January is usually a particularly cold month and we have had several snowy days this year already. Please can we urge you to encourage your children to bring their school jumpers and coats to school. 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.

Vaccinations

The second dose of the COVID-19 vaccinations for all 12-15-year olds will take place on Friday 11th February. Whilst this programme is for the second dose, the team will also administer the first dose to any eligible students. As part of the vaccination programme Year 8 students will also receive the HPV vaccine at the same time as their COVID-19 vaccine and this year group will be seen first on the day.

Consents for the vaccination have already been taken and the nursing team will not chase up missing consents on the day. There will be no need for students to wait for 15 minutes after the vaccination.

Year 7 Ongoing Transition – Year 7 Parent and Carer Tour of School – Thursday 10th March 2022

We are excited to be opening our doors once again to welcome our Year 7 students and a parent and carer to explore our school. Your child will have 30 minutes to show you around the building, setting you a number of fun, subject based challenges whilst exploring our rich learning environment.

To allow us to limit the number of people in the building, we have used an online booking system. Tickets can be ordered from Wednesday 2nd February at 9am following the link through our website.

We cannot wait to welcome you in and we are looking forward to see you all completing the challenges.

Year 8 Subject Choices

Year 8 students are currently in the process of choosing their Y8 Subject Choices in preparation for Year 9. Students will choose two options from Art, Music, Drama, Textiles, Food, Computer Science with Big Data, Product Design and Engineering. They will study these for two hours per week for the whole of Year 9.

An open evening event and virtual presentation took place on Wednesday 19th January. The Subject Choices booklet is available on Satchel One and MCAS; the Subject Choices form will be on MCAS on Friday 28th January.

Please email the completed form to kpilarek@taptonschool.co.uk on or before the deadline of Friday 4th February.

Year 9 GCSE Options

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 Virtual Information Evening on Wednesday 19th January our pathway meetings will take place on Thursday 20th and Monday 24th 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 31st 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 Wednesday 2nd February and needs to be completed and returned to school by Friday 11th February.

Year 10 Exam Week

As detailed below the government intends for final GCSE and A Level exams to go ahead this summer. Students in these year groups will have trial exam weeks in due course with further exam weeks after Easter. In order to facilitate these additional assessment weeks, we have made some adjustments to our assessment calendar. The Year 10 examination week will now take place on the week beginning the 28th March. Further details about what the requirements in each subject will be and the examination timetable will be shared by Mrs Morris in due course.

Year 11 and Year 13 Trial Exams

The government intends that GCSE and A Level exams will go ahead in the summer of 2022, therefore as part of our process to support students in their preparations for final exams, our Year 11 Trial Exam series will commence on Monday 21st February 2022 with Year 13 exams beginning on Thursday 3rd February. The trial examinations will take place in the Hall and New Hall under examination conditions. Students have received subject guidance and their timetable in order to aid their revision and preparation. We would also like to invite you to watch our virtual GCSE Exam Information presentation, which will go live on the school website on Monday 31st January which will provide further information about the final exams, TAG contingency plans and revision techniques. The A Level Information presentation will be available to view on Thursday 27th January.

Sixth Form Update

We have returned from the Christmas break to a very busy half term for the 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 The Sheffield Children's Charity, SAYIT (Emotional Wellbeing Support for LGBTQ+ young people in Sheffield), Door 43 (support for 13-25-year olds on emotional issues) and the Young Women's Housing Project. Highlights included a very successful bake sale, an attempt to make the world's longest paper chain and a brilliant session of Just Dance. Along with this, students came in fancy dress each day – a great way to end the term.

Our Year 12 students are just finishing their assessment period which will support their subject decisions going forward to Year 13. We have Year 12 Parents Evening on Thursday 3rd February and information on this will be shared soon. 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 250 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.

Our Guidance and Support programme has also continued this week as we looked at Money Matters and Addiction. Year 13 students had a presentation on Student Finance and Year 12 have had a talk from HSBC. All students took part in a discussion and presentation on Addiction. Our aim in these sessions is to help prepare and equip our young people so they are able to better navigate the world. We look forward to our next morning that will look at Employment Rights and Responsibilities.

Each morning we welcome the Sixth Form students into school with hand sanitiser. To make this even more of a cheerful time we have set up Waddoups and Winters Juke Box of Joy. Students and staff can nominate a happy song for the playlist by donating to Papyrus, a charity that works to prevent teenage suicide. This has already resulted in a wonderful mix of Abba, Queen, Arctic Monkeys and Neil Diamond! A very good way to start the day whilst at the same time raising money for an excellent cause.

Collection of Exam Certificates – Tuesday 1st February 4-6 pm in the Main Hall

Our A Level and GCSE certificate collection will take place on Tuesday 1st February beginning at 4pm. To assist in managing the number of visitors on site, please ask your child to arrive at their allotted time relating to their month of birth – see table below. If your child is unable to attend and wishes you or someone else to collect the certificates on their behalf, they need to provide the person collecting with a signed letter authorising us to release the certificates to that named individual. Please note that whoever is collecting the certificates must bring photographic ID with them (even the child themselves).

Time	Month of Birth
4.00pm	January-March
4.30pm	April-June
5.00pm	July-September
5.30pm	October-December

Drama

In the Drama department we have a busy two terms ahead of us as we start our rehearsals for the whole school production of 'West Side Story' and we will be maintaining our projects with our Year 7, 8, 9 and 10 Theatre Companies.

Y7 Theatre Company meets at 3.30pm -4.15pm on a Monday afterschool in 119, Y8 & 9 meet at 3.30pm – 4.15pm on a Wednesday afterschool, Y8 in 117 and Y9 in 119 and Y10 Theatre Company meets in 119 on a Tuesday at 3.30pm – 4.15pm. Any students that would like to come and join any of these companies are more than welcome, letters are available from Mrs Gerrard in the Drama office. We have a fun filled session of playing Drama games and working on scripted and devised performance ideas.

The scripts and music have arrived from Music Theatre International and we are now starting our rehearsal process to prepare our large cast of Y7-Y13 students who auditioned for the school play. We are hugely proud of our cast and orchestra members who are now engaging in additional hours before school, during lunch time and afterschool to rehearse and prepare our schools edition of the very popular 1950s musical. As a department we felt that this academic year would be a great time to choose 'West Side Story' on the 60th anniversary and with the new Steven Spielberg version hitting the cinemas last month. It is a challenging text both in the themes and the demands creatively, we feel that this is a great educational opportunity to learn about the context of when the play was written, the themes that the play addresses and to develop students' creative abilities as performers. We look forward to sharing updates on our rehearsal process. Our production will be performed in the school hall on Monday 11th, Tuesday 12th and Wednesday 13th July at 7.30pm.

Music

Thank you so much to everyone who supported our Christmas Concerts either through being in the audience or donating on ParentPay. It was an absolute honour to be able to perform live again and share the pupils' hard work with you. I would like to express a huge well done to all pupils involved, the performances were of an extremely high standard. If you were unable to attend, both concerts were recorded and are still available to watch on our school Vimeo page here:

<https://vimeo.com/showcase/9116927>

Senior Leaver's Concert

Our next live performance is the Senior Leaver's Concert on Thursday 24th March. This is a fabulous concert celebrating the work of our senior pupils. All of the senior ensembles will perform, plus solos from our 6th form pupils. Ticket booking will be open soon – watch this space!

It is still not too late for pupils to join one of our extra-curricular groups. If your son or daughter would like to take part, then they can just turn up. There is something for everyone with a number of ensembles requiring no previous experience at all. All information is available in the music department.

Pupils can also start instrumental or vocal lessons at any time. If you would like further information, please email me at Gpage@taptonschool.co.uk.

PE

We have had another busy half term in the PE department with many practices, fixtures and competitions. It has been wonderful to see so many enjoying school sport again with over 300 students taking part in at least one extra-curricular club each week. A special mention this term for the school's basketball teams, coached by the amazing Mr Kelly. The Year 7-11 girls' teams have performed well all year and remain unbeaten in the Sheffield Leagues. The Year 9 and Year 11 teams have produced some

excellent performances in the National League to qualify for the last 16 stage of the competition, which will take place later this term. We wish them the best of luck in what will be a tough round of matches.

Notice from our Christian Prayer Group

There is a Christian prayer group for Tapton parents. All parents and carers of Tapton pupils are welcome. For more information, please contact Teresa Bamforth on 07894161494.

Job Opportunities

We are also in the process of recruiting for additional examination invigilators; please see our website for further details.

Cleaning positions available

Mitie have a number of vacancies for Cleaners across our 6 Schools in Sheffield, If you are looking for some additional hours or you know any candidates that may be interested in any cleaning roles please pass on the details below.

To be considered for this role, you *should be passionate to deliver the exceptional every day. Knowledge of core cleaning skills, COSHH and Health and Safety would be an advantage*

For more details regarding the vacancies or to apply for any positions, email sue.tucker@mitie.com with your resume, alternatively telephone 07385489065.

Headteacher Drop-in

The next Headteacher Drop-in will take place on Monday 31st January between 3.45 and 4.45 with the last slot being 4.45. 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. Please note that whilst no appointment is necessary, parents and carers will need to wear a mask and hand sanitiser will be available on arrival. We look forward to seeing you.

The next Tapton Update will be available on Friday 11th March.

Thank you for your continued support of our school.

Tapton School

Upcoming dates for your diary

24/01/22	Year 9 GCSE Pathway meetings with a member of the Leadership Team
26/01/22	External UCAS Deadline 6.00pm Year 9 Parents Evening
31/01/22	Year 11 6th Form Application Deadline Year 11 GCSE Exam Information evening (Virtual) Year 9 GCSE Options Week this week
02/02/22	Year 9 GCSE Option Morning
03/02/22	Year 12 Parents' Evening Year 11 Poetry Live
04/02/22	Year 8 Subject Choices Form Deadline
08/02/22	Drama GCSE C2 Performance Examination
11/02/22	Year 9 GCSE Options Form Deadline School closes for half term
21/02/22	School re-opens for all students Year 11 Trial Exams commence
23/02/22	Y13 Drama C2 Performance Examinations
01/03/22	Year 6 Students find out their place at Secondary School
02/03/22	Year 7 Parents' Evening
07/03/22	Year 10 Conisborough Castle Visits this week
14/03/22	Year 8 Parents' Evening