



Supported by the Drapers'
Company of London

THE THOMAS ADAMS SCHOOL, WEM

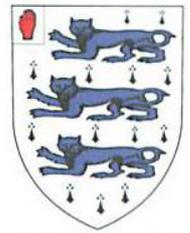
incorporating

ADAMS COLLEGE SIXTH FORM CENTRE

ADAMS HOUSE (BOARDING)

Headteacher: Mark Cooper BA (Hons)

Deputy Headteacher: Gavin Sterry BSc (Hons) MA



12th February 2021

Dear Parents / Carers

As this half term draws to a close, we would like to celebrate the provisions that we have put in place to support your child(ren)'s learning during these challenging times, and to thank you for all your continued support. You will also find details in this letter outlining plans of our continually evolving provision for after this half term holiday.

Hopefully, there is a light at the end of the tunnel, and we may begin to see students return from the 8th of March. This is **not** yet confirmed, so we will be watching the government announcements on the 22nd February for guidance. Whatever the guidance may be, we will work hard to develop a plan that supports students back into school; ensuring we are mindful of academic support, whilst considering pupil well-being and, above all, maintaining the safety of everyone in the Thomas Adams community. Once, we have clarity about the further opening of the school, we will communicate this.

On-site provision continues for critical workers/vulnerable children. Currently we have around 80 students attending daily; these pupils complete the same online learning provided by their teachers as those children at home. Whilst we can cope with the numbers of children coming into school, and are happy to be of assistance, please be aware that the government guidance has recently changed to:

Children with at least one parent or carer who is a critical worker can go to school or college if required, but parents and carers should keep their children at home if they can.

This guidance is a response to the larger numbers of children in schools, and the fact that the new variants of Covid are more transmissible.

Reflection and Parental Feedback

When we started back on the 4th of January, we had a blended approach to our online provision, but quickly up scaled this to deliver almost all our lessons, from Year 7 to 13, live and interactively. Attendance in and engagement with these lessons leapt from 55.4% to 81.3% over the first 5 weeks. Please continue to remind your child(ren) that attendance to lessons is being monitored daily and their engagement with the tasks set is also being recorded; we are contacting home if we have concerns which will be affecting pupil progress. If you have any problems with remote learning, please contact the relevant Head of Year. However, for technical or attendance issues, please contact the following so that we can support you:

- Attendance issues - attendance@thomasadams.net
- Technical issues with devices or using Teams – ICT.helpdesk@thomasadams.net
- Issues with accessing devices – tm@thomasadams.net

Since January, over 23,000 House points have been awarded by teachers and over 700 praise letters have been sent out; additional to this, hundreds of praise text messages and postcards have also been sent home.



Lowe Hill, Wem, Shropshire SY4 5UB Telephone: 01939 237000
e-mail: enquiries@thomasadams.net website: www.thomasadams.net

Excellence in education since 1650

The Thomas Adams School is part of The 3-18 Education Trust. Company Number 08064698. Registered Address: Longden Road, Shrewsbury, SY3 9EE

Thank you for completing the recent parental survey, we had 179 responses. We are grateful for the feedback that this has provided, it has helped us to evolve our provision. Pleasingly, 93% of responses said that communication from school about arrangements during lockdown have been clear and useful, whilst 91% of responses said that 'live' lessons have been helpful for learning. We do want to keep the lines of communication open between home and school, so please contact your child(ren)'s Head of Year in the first instance, if there is anything you would like to feedback to us.

Free School Meals (FSM)

During the half term period, we will continue to support our FSM families through the Government Voucher Scheme. Direction on how to access these vouchers will be issued via text directly to the families. This support will then continue into next half term. If you are not sure about anything to do with this process, please contact Mrs Howells on enquiries@thomasadams.net

Remote Learning

Thank you for your on-going support with our remote learning provision. As stated in the previous letter, we are mindful of the health and well-being of our students and their ability to manage the work set, as well as the educational value it offers them.

After half term, we will continue to provide live interactive lessons, in-line with student timetables, with staff keeping to the first 50 minutes of each lesson to allow for breaks between delivery. However, there will be a slight increase in pre-recorded lessons set via the assignment tool on Microsoft Teams. Teachers will communicate with students when pre-recorded lessons will be set and the deadlines for the work to be completed. This will be done via their Class Teams page.

We will continue to suspend home learning / additional work outside of the lessons for Years 7 to 11, to help manage their workload. Sixth Form students may continue to be set independent study work to complete where appropriate.

We hope that these developments will continue to allow your child(ren) to maintain a routine, whilst accessing a varied learning experience. It should also help them to effectively manage their schoolwork, whilst building in opportunities for them to take time away from the screen.

Year 9 Options

Following half term, we will begin the GCSE Options process for Year 9. We will share a video explaining the process on the 23rd of February. Students will have time to watch subject specific video clips and read what is involved in each of the courses from our Options Booklet, before returning their choices. The half term break provides a fantastic opportunity to discuss with your Year 9 child(ren) which subjects they enjoy and what they feel they would like to continue for the next two years to GCSE.

Safeguarding

If you have concerns about your own child(ren), or others who attend our school, please report these through to us using the email address safeguarding@thomasadams.net. This mailbox is checked daily, and we will discretely follow up all concerns raised.

COVID-19

If someone is told by NHS Test and Trace Service to stay at home and self-isolate, they may be able to get a £500 **Test and Trace Support Payment**. For the qualifying conditions and to apply see here: <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/benefits/what-help-can-i-claim-from-the-council/covid-test-and-trace-support-payments/> Sometimes, this may not be enough to address all the problems and not everyone will qualify; whether eligible for this or not, we urge people to think about applying for the other discretionary help that is available via the Council. If you are aware of anyone in our school community who is having difficulty meeting essential outgoings, please get them to contact the Council on the Covid helpline - **0345 678 9078**. People can also access grants and a range of other Covid related support through the Council our web pages here: <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/coronavirus/information-for-the-public/>

Whilst school is closed for half term, we thought it would be useful to remind you about how to contact the school regarding Covid test results. If your child has tested positive and you receive the result when the school is closed, please either email covid19@thomasadams.net or telephone the school mobile on 07376136446. These will be monitored on a regular basis during the holiday, and we will contact you for more information if necessary.

Shropshire Council is now encouraging people to be tested if they show one of the precautionary symptoms of - Shortness of breath / Headaches / Aches and pains / Feeling very tired for no good reason / Sore throat / Runny nose / Sneezing / Sometimes 'tummy ache' in children.

For more information, please refer to this link: <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/coronavirus/information-for-the-public/>

Mental Health

The BEAM service, is a local network providing invaluable support around emotions and wellbeing for children. The times and links for parent/carer virtual meetings can be found by following <https://thomasadams.net/beam-feb-march-sessions/>

Until the end of March 2021 BEAM is offering virtual sessions for parents/carers as follows, on various dates:

- **Information about the Beam service:** what Beam can offer to young people and families.
- **Managing anxious behaviors in children and young people:** an introduction to anxiety, and some straight-forward suggestions on how these can be managed by parents.
- **Sleepy Heads:** a 2-session workshop around sleep.

Please consider attending these sessions as we hope that you will find them extremely useful.

Finally, home education is really challenging, and we all appreciate that. Although teaching is our job, educating your own children is much harder! May I take this opportunity to thank you once again for your continued support; your patience and your kind words, which are also really appreciated. All the best for a pleasant and safe half term.

Yours sincerely



Mark Cooper
Headteacher