



23 February 2020

Dear Students, Parents, Carers and Guardians

I was delighted to hear confirmation from the Government that all students will be able to resume face to face education in the week beginning Monday 8th March 2021. I am very much looking forward to seeing everyone back in school. I know that parents and students will have some anxieties about returning to school but I am confident that we can achieve this safely as long as we continue to work together and stick to the rules that we have established over the last few months.

In this letter I will provide you with a brief overview of what we know so far so that you can start thinking about preparing for the resumption of school for all students.

Covid testing at school before students return to school

In Government guidance that was published yesterday afternoon it makes it clear that carrying out Covid testing of students before they return is an important part of the process. We are expected to be able to offer every student 3 tests (spread out over a few days) before they return to the classroom. This is so that we can identify any member of the school community who may have the virus but are not showing symptoms. We know that as many as 1 in 3 people who have Coronavirus do not show symptoms so testing students before they return will help prevent the spread of the virus in school and minimise the chances of disrupting education any further. Parents must provide their consent for children under the age of 16 to be tested and we would greatly appreciate your support in providing this as it will help keep all members of the community as safe as possible. Well over 60% of parents have already signed the consent form but if you haven't please can you do so by completing this [form](#).

As you can imagine arranging 3 tests for each student before they return to school will be a logistical challenge and we will need to spread the testing out over a number of days. This will mean that not all students will be able to start back on Monday 8th March but we hope to have all students back to lessons by the end of the week. Once we have finalised arrangements we will write again to explain how the testing will work and inform you of when your child's testing appointments will be. It will be very important that your child attends their appointment as the Government has announced that ongoing twice weekly testing will be carried out at home instead of in school. We will be able to show them how to do it properly and set your minds at rest that the tests will be as accurate as possible.

Social distancing and face coverings/masks

When we return it will be very important that students observe social distancing and good hygiene routines. One significant difference will be that students will be required to wear a face covering/mask when in classrooms as well as when in corridors and other shared indoor spaces. The Government advice is very clear about the role face coverings/masks have in reducing the spread of the virus and we need your support with this too by ensuring that your child comes to school wearing a face covering/mask and has a spare with them. We will expect everyone to use a face covering/mask at all times. We have a small number of students who are exempt from wearing a face covering/mask and this exemption will remain in place. We will ensure that students with hearing impairments who rely on lip reading are supported in their learning in the best way possible. The Government has said that this requirement to wear a face covering/mask will be reviewed at the end of the term.

Bubbles, staggered starts, breaks and lunches

We will be reviewing all of our Covid rules and procedures over the coming days to ensure that we can reopen as safely as possible but it is unlikely that there will be many significant changes from the systems that we put in place during the Autumn term. Year groups will remain in bubbles, breaks and lunchtimes will continue to be staggered and we will continue with the same arrival and departure times. Any changes to these rules and procedures will be communicated to you before term restarts.



I hope that this letter has been a useful starting point in outlining some of the key points about the return to school from March 8th. I will keep you informed of our plans as they develop but if you have any queries or concerns please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Yours sincerely

Jim Parker
Principal