



26 February 2021

Dear Parents, Carers and Guardians

I am writing to update you on our plans for the reopening of the school to all students in the week beginning 8th March. Our decision making and planning process is led by the Government guidance that has been published earlier this week, a copy of which can be read [here](#).

Testing and phased opening

Our intention is to open the school over a number of days so that by the end of the week beginning the 8th March all students will be back in school. We need to be able to offer the first of 3 Covid lateral flow tests before the students start their lessons so the school will reopen as follows:

Monday 8th March	Years 11,12 and 13 return (first test on Friday 5th)
Tuesday 9th March	Years 9 and 10 return (first test on Monday 8th)
Wednesday 10th March	Year 7 return (first test on Tuesday 9th)
Thursday 11th March	Year 8 return (first test on Wednesday 10th)

You will receive a separate letter that will detail how the testing process works, why we are asking students to take part in testing, when your child's first testing appointment will be and what to expect when your child arrives for their test. We are very keen that all students take part in the testing programme as it will help us to keep everyone safe and to minimise disruption to learning. Please do continue to return your consent forms as soon as possible.

Virtual meet the Form Tutor meetings 5th March

On Friday 5th March we are going to suspend the normal live lessons and virtual school lessons for a special well-being no screen opportunity to allow students to prepare for off-computer learning as well as taster sessions for guided choice subjects. We are going to provide students in years 7,8,10 and 11 with some different challenges that we hope will be fun to do and will not need hours spent in front of a screen. Year 9 students are going to be provided with some information about their option choices that are coming up. Again more details will come in the letter about the tutor appointments.

We will also hold virtual parent meetings with your child's form tutor to brief you on what we will be doing in the three weeks between reopening and the Easter break, to address any anxieties that you may have about returning to school and to remind students of some of the new rules we will have in place when they return to the classroom. We will be holding these meetings via a video call system and you and your child will have a short appointment with your tutor to have this conversation which you will be able to book across the day that suits your situation. Further details about how to log in and book your appointment will be provided in a letter early next week.

Interruption to home learning on Thursday 4th March

On Thursday 4th March we are going to finish live lessons at lunchtime in order to allow teacher meetings to take place in school your child will still be able to access resources through the virtual school. This will be the first time that teaching teams have been able to meet face to face and we want to be able to provide some time together in school to finalise the plans for face to face teaching the following week. We think this is important enough to disrupt home learning for an afternoon.

Face coverings/masks

You will have heard in the media that in order to increase the safety for everyone in the school community there will be a requirement for students and staff to wear face coverings/masks more widely when we return. Until now face coverings/masks have been worn when in confined shared spaces such as corridors and staircases.

From Monday 8th March, face coverings/masks will need to be worn at all times during the school day with the only exception being when eating/drinking at break or lunchtime. At all other times face coverings/masks should be worn properly covering the nose and mouth. There will be no need to wear face coverings/masks in PE lessons or other lessons that demand active involvement such as Dance.



Students who have certain medical conditions who are exempt for wearing face coverings, must carry a Lord Grey exemption card with them at all times as staff will challenge students who are not wearing them. Parents are responsible for ensuring that children have a face covering/mask for use in school and it would be wise to have a spare one too. We know that it is going to be difficult to be wearing a face covering/mask for such a long time but the Government deems this necessary to allow secondary schools to reopen.

It is essential that students understand the importance of wearing face coverings/masks to keep themselves and others safe and we appreciate your support in reiterating this message at home. We will be recording C points for those students that are not bringing a face mask or covering as well as not wearing one and will involve parents if there are repeated concerns. The Government will review this policy again at Easter when we hope that we can then revert to the previous approach where face coverings/masks are not required in classrooms.

Other systems of control

We will continue to follow the procedures that we put in place in the Autumn term to reduce the chances of the transmission of the virus. These are known as the systems of control and include the regular cleaning of surfaces, keeping classrooms well ventilated, keeping social distance wherever possible encouraging hand washing/sanitising, reducing movement and mixing of year groups around the school and having a staggered end of the school day. There are no changes to the previous arrangements that were in place in December. The only differences this term are the use of weekly Covid lateral flow testing and the wider use of face coverings/masks. Our risk assessment is being updated to reflect these changes and will be available on the Academy website.

We are very excited to have the students back in school so that face to face teaching can resume. We know that the students are looking forward to coming back and seeing their friends and teachers but are also aware that some students and parents are feeling some anxiety about coming back. In your meeting with the form tutor next week please do raise any concerns that you may have and if there is anything more urgent, do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely

Jim Parker
Principal