



24th February 2021

Dear Parents /Carers

Following the government's announcement regarding the full reopening of schools, we would like to thank you for your patience whilst have been working through the initial guidance around the return to school from the 8th March 2021. It is fair to say the guidance continues to evolve daily, but we wanted to give you an update as our re-opening plans develop.

Firstly, we are incredibly pleased to be able to welcome the students back into school. Whilst we have been impressed with their engagement with the remote learning, nothing can replace being in the classroom and being able to socialise with their peers. Hopefully we will all welcome the sense of normality that a return to school life will bring.

Safety Measures

The health and safety of our students and staff continues to be our main priority. All of our safety procedures adopted before Christmas will remain in place, and we will be sending out a reminder of these next week so that students can refresh themselves on the guidelines ahead of a return. In addition, our measures will be strengthened by the following additional procedures:

- Voluntary Lateral Flow Testing for students – where students wish to take part, we will offer three voluntary lateral flow tests, each 3 to 5 days apart. Following three completed tests, students will be issued with home testing kits to complete twice weekly. Further detailed guidance will be issued with these tests. Due to the demands this testing schedule will place on school resources, we will not have the opportunity to offer individual flexibility related to the date and time of test appointments.
- Staff voluntary lateral flow testing – all staff will be offered tests to complete at home twice weekly
- National guidance currently states until Easter, face coverings must also be worn by staff and students in lessons when social distancing cannot be maintained. This does not apply in situations where wearing a face covering would impact on the ability to take part in exercise or strenuous activity, for example in PE lessons. We are hoping that this additional requirement will be a short-term temporary measure and the government have committed to reviewing this for the summer term. Students who have indicated that they are exempt from wearing face masks, have been issued with a badge to indicate that school are aware of this. In these cases, students should continue to wear the badge on their blazer and will not be required to comply with this.

Phased Return of Students

We have been working over the last few weeks testing staff and students who are in school. However, the size of our student population will require us to significantly scale up our testing operation, should all students opt to take part. In recognition of this, the government

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has given discretion to secondary schools to do a phased return during week commencing 8th March. We are very keen to return all students to classroom learning as soon as is practical while ensuring we mitigate risks for staff and students. To support this, we will produce a testing schedule that enables students to return to the classroom as early as possible from the 8th March. Before we finalise the arrangements for a phased return of students, we need to confirm the scale of testing based on student and parent/carer consent. We also would like to explore whether students consenting to testing in Key Stage 4 and 5 are able to access the school site for testing week commencing the 1st March.

We have therefore shared with all parents/carers via our Edulink App a 'consent for testing' form. For students in Years 12 and 13 this has been shared directly with the students, as they are able to provide their own consent.



Form can be found on this tab in Edulink. Please note it will disappear on Friday at 12 noon

Please could we ask you to complete this by no later than 12 noon on Friday 26th February.

Once we confirm the numbers in each year group accessing the testing arrangements we will be able to communicate a more detailed plan around the re-opening of school and return dates for each year group early next week.

You will be hearing more from us over the coming days and we would like to thank you for your support and patience as we plan to fully reopen our doors once again.

Yours sincerely

Delia Martin
Headteacher

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