



25th February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope you and your family are well. Thank you for your continued support and understanding as we collectively handle the challenges posed by Covid-19.

You will no doubt have seen the Prime Minister's announcement that schools will re-open fully, for all students, from Monday 8th March, with testing in place for all students. The Government has given secondary schools discretion as to how to phase the return to school over that week, and **I will write to you shortly with further details about how we will do that.**

We are looking forward very much to having all students back in our school and want to assure you that – as has been the case throughout the coronavirus crisis – we will ensure the school is as safe as it possibly can be. **Your child's health, and the health of all our students and staff, is the most important factor always for us.**

There are a number of specific points about the full return to school that I wanted to set out in this letter, which I hope are helpful.

Testing

- All students will be consistently tested for Covid-19, using 'lateral flow tests'. **It is not compulsory to take these tests, but the Government's health advice is that effective testing helps stop the virus spreading and will mean schools are as safe as possible, so is encouraging it.**
- The Department for Education will shortly provide us with the testing kits, which can be taken at school or at home, and we will update you on the collection and delivery of these kits in due course.
- Once these tests are received:
 - **Students will be tested by trained staff three times at school in the first two weeks back.**
 - After the first two weeks back at school, students will be provided with two rapid tests to use each week at home.
 - Students will be allowed to attend lessons as normal after their first negative result.
 - Parents and carers will be required to report results to schools to record. We will confirm how this system will operate in due course.
 - Students who develop Covid-19 symptoms should self-isolate immediately, as now, according to Government guidelines.
 - If a student tests positive for Covid-19, they must self-isolate for 10 days from the day after they tested positive or the day after they start to have symptoms.
 - The school will retain a "small" testing site for those unable to test at home, while all our staff will also be given twice weekly home tests.



- As mentioned, trained staff will supervise tests taken at school. Lateral flow tests are quick and easy to administer, using a swab of your nose and throat. Results take around half an hour from testing and will be shared directly with staff and pupils participating. For under-18s, staff can oversee the swab process. Where participants are under-16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed.

Masks

- The Government has recommended the use of face masks indoors – including in classrooms. This policy will be reviewed over the Easter Holidays so will be in place until at least the end of this term, and applies to students, staff, and visitors (including parents), unless they are exempt from wearing one.
- We therefore encourage all students and parents to ensure they have a suitable number of face masks for the resumption of school on 8th March.

The Government's announcement indicates we are tentatively returning to normal. However, I wanted to reiterate how alert we are to the continued risk of Covid-19. We will continue to adhere to stringent health and safety measures now, and when fully open. Your support in helping us be as safe as possible is much appreciated and will help ensure we stay open to all pupils, and keep your child, our staff, and you, safe.

I hope this letter is helpful, and reassuring, but please let me know if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,

Adrian Price
Principal