

1<sup>st</sup> March 2021

Dear Parent or carer,

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.

We are working to keep our school as safe as possible. You may have heard that testing for those without coronavirus symptoms is beginning across the country using new, quicker COVID-19 tests known as 'lateral flow tests'. Along with the other protective measures we are taking, these tests will help staff and students to remain in school safely. Up to one third of people who have coronavirus experience no symptoms. 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.

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.

Students will be tested by trained staff three times at school in the first two weeks back. Students will be invited in for their first test and will go straight home once we have the result – this takes around 30 minutes. A timetable for attendance is enclosed. The 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> tests will be administered during the school day as identified on the timetable for those students having consented. All non-consenting students are expected in school on these testing days (these students will continue with lessons as normal)

- Students will be allowed to attend lessons as normal after their first negative result.
- After the first two weeks back at school, students will be provided with two rapid tests to use each week at home. Further information on how this will operate will follow in due course.
- Staff will also be required to take two rapid tests each week at home.
- 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.

If you are happy for your child to be tested, please fill in the attached consent statement **on the purple sheet** and have your son/daughter bring this with them when they return to the Academy at their allocated test time. A record will be kept of who has consented to the testing process.

*Continued overleaf*

If you do not consent to your child being tested then they must attend the Academy as usual on the next Academy day after their year group has received their first test.

Please find enclosed the following documents:

- Testing Registration and Consent form – the consent form (on purple sheet) MUST be completed and brought back in by the student on their allocated day of testing.
- Educational Establishment Covid-19 Testing Privacy Statement
- Timetable of attendance for testing

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

Mr A Price



**Principal**