



Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

I do hope that you have managed, under the circumstances, to have a restful and enjoyable half term break.

You will, no doubt, have seen the Prime Minister's address to the nation, outlining the 'roadmap' to moving the country out of national lockdown. We were particularly heartened to hear that schools would be reopening from Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March; we are so looking forward to welcoming our students back into our schools once more. You can see the latest guidance from the Department of Education: [Mass testing for secondary pupils as all schools and colleges fully reopen from 8 March - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/mass-testing-for-secondary-pupils-as-all-schools-and-colleges-fully-reopen-from-8-march)

I wanted to write to you to set out our initial plans for reintroducing our students into schools. The DfE has stated that **school attendance will be mandatory for all students** from Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March and that **schools will have discretion on how to phase the return of students over that week** to allow them to be tested on return. We will continue to take a measured approach to ensure that all members of our school community are kept safe.

After an initial programme of three tests in school, students will be provided with two rapid tests to use each week at home. **You will need to provide consent for your child to be tested in school and you can do this by following the link here and filling in the form to provide your consent:-**

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=43ymUm9EJ0G4TAzw1UgBs19rvTdtL5GjUDNkenPHrJUNkpZWVE1QTdDQ0dLTjQ5WEg0NUpPNEw1Ni4u>

If you have more than one child attending the school they can be recorded on the same form. We will need to plan carefully for this testing, so this form needs to be completed by the deadline of **Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March, at 3pm.**

#### **Clinically vulnerable staff and students**

The latest guidance is that Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) staff and students should be supported to work remotely and should not attend school at present. We have previously contacted parents/carers of any CEV students and discussed their needs. Please contact us directly if you have concerns and you have not already spoken to a member of staff.



### Face coverings

On their return, students will be expected to wear face coverings when moving around the site and in corridors as they had been before the lockdown. **In addition, the DfE have stated that face coverings should be worn in classrooms.** This will not apply in situations where wearing a face covering would impact on the ability to take part in exercise, for example in PE lessons. This means that students will continue to wear a clean, washable face covering on their return to school.

### Uniform and appropriate clothing on cold days

To reflect the updated guidance, teachers will continue to ensure that their classrooms have good airflow and ventilation to reduce the risk of transmission. On cold days, students should be reminded to wear suitable layers of clothing (e.g. base layers under uniform). **Please note that all students will be expected to attend school in full uniform, apart from days where they have PE when they will need to wear their PE kit.**

I know that some families will feel anxious about the return to school. Please be reassured that the safety of our young people and staff is of paramount importance and our robust risk assessments are regularly updated and reviewed to reflect the latest guidance. Since the start of term, we have responded immediately to any identified positive cases or any children or staff with symptoms to reduce the risk of transmission. We continue to use a robust procedure to identify contacts and move quickly to ensure that close contacts are sent home to isolate.

In order to facilitate the safe return to schools and, in keeping with the DfE's suggestion that we can use discretion to support our wider reopening, we will be operating a staggered start from March 8<sup>th</sup> to ensure that all students have the opportunity to receive the necessary tests. As the guidance states that all children who are tested must have a negative test before they can return to the classroom, we will need to stagger the times for students to return to school. **We will be in contact next week to let you know the specific time and date that your child should return to school and with detailed arrangements about the reopening of school. All children will be back, in a phased approach, by the end of the week beginning March 8<sup>th</sup>.**

Your support and cooperation is so valued. We have worked together, during these challenging weeks, to give the children the best experience that we can. We can now look forward to them getting back into their routines, having face to face teaching and the social contact with their peers which is so important for their well-being.

Yours faithfully

I Smith-Childs  
Headteacher