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Dear parent / carer,

I hope this letter finds you well and that you enjoyed the half-term break. As you will no doubt be aware, schools will be reopening on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March and so I just wanted to write to you with outline plans as to how we will be approaching this. The measures which we had in place before Christmas worked very well and these will be maintained as pupils return. The only additional measure for families to be aware of is that pupils will now be expected to wear face-coverings in classrooms as well as in communal indoor areas, at least for the few weeks until the end of term. This measure has certainly been reiterated by the government on several occasions and is seen as key at this time – I would appreciate your support in reemphasising this with your child once again before they return as it is a matter of personal responsibility and consideration for others; not just in school but for society in general. I would strongly recommend that pupils obtain a reusable and comfortable face mask for this period of time if they do not have one already. Apart from this, all measures such as hand-sanitising, zoned areas, staggered changeovers and lunches etc will continue as before.

The biggest challenge for us as a school will be to carry out the Lateral Flow Testing for all pupils as they return. Pupils will have to be tested prior to starting lessons and then to receive 2 further tests, 3-5 days apart over the following 10 school days. This is well over 1500 tests. After that, we will be providing families with home-testing kits which will allow you to test your child twice per week; further details about this will follow.

This is going to be a major logistical challenge and so we are working through how we will be able to manage this based on our testing capacity. We also have to be aware of the fact that pupils will only be able to return to lessons once they have had a negative test result and so timing is going to have to be carefully managed. We already have outline plans in place but I am still liaising with the LA and getting PHE advice before I firm these plans up.

Based on our capacity, I think that we will be looking at staggering the return of year groups over that week starting with Year 11 on 8<sup>th</sup> March and then increasing by one year group per day up until all year groups are in by the end of the week i.e. Monday – Year 11, Tuesday – Year 10, Wednesday – Year 9, Thursday – Year 8, Friday – Year 7. I will write to you again towards the end of the week with specific timings and further detail but a key part of the process will be to gain written consent from you beforehand. You will therefore receive an online consent form shortly; I would ask that you complete this as swiftly as possible after you receive it as there will be very little margin for delays due to the tight timing of the tests. Almost 20% of the pupils, as well as many staff, have been having tests throughout lockdown as they have been attending. These tests have run smoothly and so we can use this experience as we now expand into testing larger numbers. It is strongly recommended that all pupils have tests before returning to lessons however if you feel very strongly that your child should not have a test for any reason, then please let us know in advance.

As always, thank you so much for your support and cooperation. Please rest assured that we are continuing to work hard to ensure that we get the pupils back into school as swiftly and safely as possible. I will write again later this week with further detail.

Yours sincerely,

Dean Williams