

Thursday 25th February 2021

Dear parent / carer,

As you are aware, we will be able to start welcoming children back to school from Monday 8th March. Fortunately we are already in a strong position to reopen the school fully and safely as the measures we introduced in September as directed by the government, are still valid. Therefore, our original 'COVID Plan' still stands albeit with some tweaking – I have therefore updated this and it is now on the 'COVID-19 Advice' section of our website. Please spend some time reading through this again with your child prior to their returning. The vast majority of the measures are managed in school however, as before, certain aspects will only be possible with parental support. These include ensuring your child arrives at school every day with:

- **Waterproof coats**
- **Their own snacks for first break if required**
- **All their own equipment (including earphones) to prevent sharing**
- **Their own small bottle of hand sanitiser**
- **Their own face mask**

Face Masks: I am hoping that it will be a smooth transition for the pupils as they will be used to the way we operated last term. The main difference will be that, at least temporarily, staff and pupils will be required to wear face masks whilst in lessons, as well as in communal indoor areas, unless exempt. This is not ideal however it will hopefully only be for a short period and, due to our systems, pupils have a few minutes outside between each lesson when they will not be required to wear masks. They will also not be required to wear them for PE lessons. We will talk to the pupils about this on their return however your support in this, for both their safety and that of others, will be absolutely crucial.

Lateral Flow Testing: The other challenge for us will be carrying out mass testing before pupils return to lessons. This will be a major undertaking and we have been working hard to prepare for this. We are planning to test one form group at a time, based on the schedule outlined below. As you will see, the return is staggered and so each year group will be tested on a particular day and should not return to school until their allocated day. Following receipt of a negative test result, pupils in that year group will then immediately start lessons and stay in school so that all year groups will be in school by the Friday. We will also be carrying out the 2nd and 3rd tests starting that week with pupils who are in school and will hope to complete all 3 tests by 19th March. Families will then be provided with home-testing kits; more information on that is to follow.

There is, however, going to be the logistical challenge of keeping large numbers of pupils apart prior to testing, carrying out the tests successfully and then keeping pupils apart until their results come through. This will require a great deal of 'waiting around' for pupils and therefore I would ask that, if any families are able to bring their children in just in time for their allocated form time slot, rather than to send them in on school transport on that morning, it would be incredibly helpful. That said, if this is not possible due to your personal circumstances, I totally understand.

Consent: It is essential that we gain consent for every single pupil prior to carrying out the testing. Any delay to receiving consent will delay the reintroduction of pupils to school and therefore I would ask that you complete the online consent form straight away. Here is the link:

<https://forms.gle/H5oSm14D8kuLxUdq7>



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This link has also been emailed to you with this letter (which is also on our website) and will be texted to you as an additional measure. If you have any problems accessing the online form then please simply email school admin who will be happy to help.

Finally I am very keen to get the school running as swiftly and safely as possible. The children were excellent last term and I am sure that this will continue in March. Key worker and vulnerable pupils should continue to attend as they have been throughout lockdown, regardless of year group although they will be tested again along with their year group as per the schedule. They will, of course, also be required to wear full school uniform from 8th March as will all returning pupils. Thank you once again for your support and we look forward to seeing the children back in school shortly.

Yours sincerely,

Dean Williams

TESTING SCHEDULE

DATE	TIME	FORM	
Monday 8 th March (Year 11)	9.00	11EL	INFORMATION ON TESTING: <i>Lateral Flow Devices (LFD) are fast turnaround tests that can process COVID-19 samples on site without the need for laboratory equipment and are able to generate results in around half an hour. The tests are completely voluntary although we hope as many pupils as possible will take the test to minimise the risk of infections spreading in school. Consent will be required in advance.</i> <i>The test is self-administered and the testing of the sample does not require a laboratory so results are delivered to the contact details provided within 30 minutes. The tests involve taking a swab from the back of the throat and nose. Pupils will be offered three Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests spaced three to five days apart over the initial 2 week period before moving on to home-testing.</i>
	9.40	11MA	
	11.00	11GA	
	11.40	11GO	
Tuesday 9 th March (Year 10)	9.00	10EL	
	9.40	10MA	
	11.00	10GA	
	11.40	10GO	
Wednesday 10 th March (Year 9)	9.00	9EL	
	9.40	9MA	
	11.00	9GA	
	11.40	9GO	
Thursday 11 th March (Year 8)	9.00	8EL	
	9.40	8MA	
	11.00	8GA	
	11.40	8GO	
Friday 12 th March (Year 7)	9.00	7EL	
	9.40	7MA	
	11.00	7GA	
	11.40	7GO	