



Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you are all well.

We are really pleased that on Monday the Prime Minister announced plans for the return of all pupils to schools and colleges, this will take place **from** Monday 8th March, the guidance attached to the announcement can be found here, [roadmap for leaving lockdown](#).

The Department for Education (DfE) has also issued specific Educational guidance for Schools, it can be found [here](#)

Students returning to school

The guidance states that for students to return to school they need to be offered three Lateral Flow COVID-19 tests, however, they are able to return to school after their first test, as long as it is negative. The DfE guidance on Page 30 states;

*'Secondary schools should offer pupils testing at an on-site ATS from 8 March. Testing and return of pupils can be **phased during the first week** to manage the number of pupils passing through the test site at any one time. You should offer 3 tests, 3 to 5 days apart. You have the flexibility to consider how best to deliver testing on a phased basis from 8 March, depending on your circumstances and local arrangements, but you should prioritise vulnerable children and children of critical workers, and year groups 10 to 13. **Pupils should return to face-to-face education following their first negative test result.** Pupils not undergoing testing should attend school in line with your phased return arrangements. Schools will have discretion on how to test students over that week as they return to the classroom.*

Therefore, in order for us to test almost 1200 students, we will be staggering the return of our students throughout the week beginning Monday 8th March. As per the guidance we will be prioritising our older students in exam classes and working down through the year groups as the week goes on.

At this stage we are currently working through the planning of how to test almost 1200 students, our current thinking is that remote live lessons will continue for some of the week, with students being provided a day and time for a test. Students will then attend school for their test, return home to continue their online learning and start back full time at school for lessons the following day, presuming their result is negative. The remaining two tests will be offered to students whilst in school during one of their lessons. Home testing kits will then subsequently be provided to all families in order to test their children twice a week.

At this stage we have not finalised the specific times and dates of tests as we are waiting for a few more details. I aim to get all the information regarding students returning to school to parents as soon as possible.



Government Evidence

Yesterday the Government published an [evidence summary](#) which sets out the evidence relevant to and in support of, the government's decision to lift restrictions on education from Monday 8 March. The government's wider decision-making is set out in the government's [COVID-19 Response – Spring 2021](#) and [supporting scientific evidence](#).

The evidence is that the risk to children and young people from coronavirus (COVID-19) is low. Whilst education settings can be places where transmission occurs, there is no strong evidence of them driving largescale community transmission.

Friday 5th March

On Friday 5th March, all lessons will be placed on Class Charts for students to be able to access. There will be no live lessons on that day. Many of our staff have not yet been into school since Christmas and it is important they have a day to prepare classrooms and resources for the following week. Provision for key worker and vulnerable students will continue in school, although, just for this day, we would encourage students to stay at home and work as it provides greater flexibility for staff in school.

Masks

I wanted to give you advanced warning of the requirement of students to wear masks in all indoor areas on their return to school, including during class time. This is an additional measure that the Government have introduced in order to limit the spread of the virus.

With this in mind it would be useful for you to ensure your child has a number of masks to ensure they can wear a clean one each day.

Whilst I know this letter does not provide a full set of instructions about our return, I wanted to provide information about our initial thoughts. As you know there is a lot of information still being released, however, like always I will endeavour to keep you fully informed. Later this week we are expecting news from Ofqual, the exam regulator, with further information about this summer's exams. Again, once we hear we will keep you informed.

As always, thank you for your support. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Keep safe and well everyone,

Paul Skipp
Headteacher



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