



Thursday 25th February 2021

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

I am sure you are aware of the government announcements made this week regarding the wider opening of schools from Monday 8 March.

We are delighted to be planning to welcome back all students. We feel that, while many students have done extremely well with their remote learning, they all need to be back in lessons and meeting up with their friends and peers, albeit in a safe and controlled manner. The following information is now provided as an update, and to ensure that everyone knows what to expect over the next few weeks.

#### Lateral Flow Tests

As you will have seen, secondary schools are expected to offer students three lateral flow tests before they return to school. The three tests need to be 3 - 5 days apart. These tests are currently seen as being voluntary and it is not a requirement for students to take up the offer of testing for them to return to school. However, the more students and staff that take a test, the safer school will be for the whole community.

From our experience of testing staff, critical-worker students and the tests we carried out on Tuesday (when Year 8 and 9 students came in to be vaccinated), we know we have capacity to process a year group in 3 - 4 hours. We also need to make sure the repeat tests for each group happen within a maximum of 5 days. We have been informed today by the Department for Education that testing can start before March 8th. We are therefore planning to maximise the testing we can conduct next week, to allow as many students as possible to return to school on Monday 8 March.

There is an appendix to this letter which details when the various cohorts will be returning to school. We will be staggering the time of first arrival for each cohort by tutor group to allow us to carry out testing on students in a safe and controlled manner as they arrive. Further details about the exact timings for each tutor group will be published in the next few days.

For tests carried out next week (in the week of 1st March), students must only arrive at school for the time of their test appointment, and must return home immediately afterwards - and while in school, they must of course maintain a 2-m social distance from all other students and staff at all times.

Once the three tests have been completed in school, students will be expected to self-test regularly at home. The Department for Education hopes that the three tests done in school will help them to be able to do this effectively. Please note that students are only allowed to carry out a home test if they have participated in testing at school. Students aged 12 and above can test themselves, although any year 7 student under the age of 12 should be swabbed by an adult.

We are very grateful for the overwhelming response we received from parents and the community when we asked for volunteers to help out with the Lateral Flow Testing programme - however, as we

are now no longer expected to test all students twice a week, we are confident that we will be able to manage this with current school staff. But my sincere thanks once again to everyone who so kindly volunteered.

In terms of learning, we will continue to deliver remote education until Friday 5 March, and also for a couple of days in the week beginning Monday 8th March, as detailed in the table below. In addition, we will continue to offer in-school provision for vulnerable children and the children of critical workers, also until Friday 5 March - although we appreciate that the testing requirements will cut across both of these. Teachers are aware that students will be attending school for their test appointments, and we will support students who are attending the in-school provision to attend their test appointments.

There are obvious logistical problems with organising mass testing, so it would help us enormously if parents / carers were able to complete some of the administrative tasks at home, please. I would therefore be grateful if you would take time to read the appendix B on how to register for a lateral flow test, and if possible, and arrange for this to be completed by students at home as this will help us to significantly reduce the time spent in school doing this. Thank you!

#### Face Coverings and Infection Control Measures

From Monday 8 March, students will be required (unless subject to an exemption) to wear face coverings in classrooms, as well as in corridors and communal spaces indoors. Please make sure your child has a good supply and brings at least two face coverings each day. This advice forms part of the national guidance, so schools have no autonomy in this matter.

We will continue to enforce social distancing, one-way systems, regular hand-washing and sanitising, as well as the expectation that students will wipe down their work areas before and after each lesson.

#### Timetable

We will be working to the same timetable as we were in September, with shortened lunchtimes and a slightly later start or earlier finish. However after Easter, once the warmer weather becomes slightly more reliable, we will revert to the timings we used in September, allowing us to enjoy a longer lunchtime and a slightly later finish (3.30pm for years 7, 9 and 11, and 4pm for years 8 and 10).

#### Breaks and Lunchtimes

To ensure that students are able to socially distance in the canteen, and to have a break from screens (and actually talk to each other!), we will be enforcing a strict 'no-phones to be used in the building' rule, which will include no use in the school canteen. Students will of course be welcome to use their phones while they are in the playground / tennis courts, but phones will be expected to be put away while in the building or as students are moving between lessons.

#### Year 11

The report on the consultation on GCSE grading has just been announced, and is currently being discussed. We will be updating Year 11 students and their parents as soon as we have considered this announcement.

In the meantime, however, I would like to reassure all year 11 students that we will not be holding mock exams immediately when they return to school and certainly not before the Easter holiday. Once we have more information about how students' grades will be awarded this year, we will formulate a strategic plan for appropriate assessments in all subjects which will ensure that all students are given the very best opportunity to be successful. More news soon.

Kind regards

Simon Bamford  
Headteacher

## Appendix A: Staggered arrival by year group.

Thursday 4th or Friday 5th. All students are offered the first test on the following days, according to year group (see below). Students should come in just for their test, then go home.

	time	7	8	9	10	11
Thur 4th	9-10	remote	remote	remote	remote	testing
	10-11	remote	remote	remote	remote	testing
	11-12	remote	remote	remote	testing	remote
	12-1	remote	remote	remote	testing	remote
	1-2	remote	remote	testing	remote	remote
	2-3	remote	remote	testing	remote	remote
Fri 5th	9-10	testing	remote	remote	remote	remote
	10-11	testing	remote	remote	remote	remote
	11-12	remote	testing	remote	remote	remote
	12-1	remote	testing	remote	remote	remote
	1-2	remote	remote	remote	remote	remote
	2-3	remote	remote	remote	remote	remote

Currently envisaged plan for phased return in week beginning 8th March

Week A	lesson	7	8	9	10	11
Mon 8th	1	home	remote	remote	home	testing (3 TG)
	2	home	remote	remote	testing (3 TG)	testing/tutor
	3	home	remote	remote	testing/tutor	lessons
Tue 9th	1	testing (3 TG)	home	remote	lessons	remote
	2	testing/tutor	testing (3 TG)	remote	lessons	remote
	3	lessons	testing/tutor	remote	lessons	remote
Wed 10th	1	lessons	lessons	testing	remote	lessons
	2	lessons	lessons	testing / tutor	remote	lessons
	3	lessons	lessons	lessons	remote	lessons
Thurs 11th	1	lessons	lessons	lessons	lessons	testing/lessons
	2	lessons	lessons	lessons	testing/lessons	testing/lessons
	3	lessons	lessons	lessons	testing/lessons	lessons
Fri 12th	1	testing/lessons	lessons	lessons	lessons	lessons
	2	testing/lessons	testing/lessons	lessons	lessons	lessons
	3	lessons	testing/tutor	lessons	lessons	lessons

Some students will be offered their third test on Monday 15th March

Mon 15th	1	lessons	lessons	testing/lessons	lessons	lessons
	2	lessons	lessons	testing/lessons	lessons	lessons
	3	lessons	lessons	lessons	lessons	lessons

## **Appendix B - How to set up an account for a Lateral Flow Test**

### **Registering for a Lateral Flow Test (LFT) Instructions**

You will need

- A signed consent form - please hand this to a member of staff when you come into school to take your test.
- A mobile phone with an internet connection

Setting up an Account (at home if possible)

1. Open your internet browser and type in:  
<https://test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/register-kit>
2. Ignore the "you'll need the test kit barcode"
3. Registering for: **Myself**
4. Click "**Sign in or create an account**"
5. **Enter email address** - you can use your school or a home account (you will need to confirm the email in step 8)
6. **Create a password**
7. Open up your email and confirm receipt of the email.
8. **Enter your mobile number**, you will then be sent a code which you need to enter.
9. You can now exit the account - but ensure you remember the email address and the password you registered with so that you can login to the website each time you come in to take your test in school.

## **Appendix C - Consent form**

Link to Consent Form and Privacy Notice: [HERE](#)

Parents will need to have completed the consent form and a hard copy brought into school before we can carry out a Lateral Flow Test.

Please note this consent form is for the in-school testing only, and is not required for home testing (NB: the act of carrying out a home test is considered to constitute consent). If carrying out a home test, please be aware of the privacy notice available via the link above.