



Marden High School

Friday 5th March 2021

Dear All,

It has been a busy week of making arrangements to welcome all our students back next week, and we are very much looking forward to seeing everyone back in the school building. We have shared a lot of information with everyone over the past week or so, and I hope therefore that everyone is well prepared for what we hope will be an enjoyable return to the classroom. By way of a quick recap on arrangements for next week here are a few key reminders taken from information shared over recent days:

- On Monday Year 9 students will be coming in to go to the Sports Hall for their Meningococcal and DTP injections. They will need to be accompanied by an adult, and bring their consent forms, and will go back home straight after this.
- Year 11 students will be the first to return to classrooms on Monday 8th. They will be tested before they await their result and then proceed on to timetabled lessons. Then it will be Year 10 on Tuesday, Year 9 on Wednesday, Year 8 on Thursday, and Year 7 on Friday. Parents have been informed of the specific time for their child to come in. Remote learning continues until students return to school. Teachers will set work and provide feedback virtually up to this point.
- Students will be waiting outside for a short time before and after their lateral flow tests, and whilst there is some shelter, the forecast is predicting some rain so wearing a warm coat is advisable.
- Students who have been attending school during the lockdown can still attend school each day until the rest of their year group returns. On that day they will come into school at the usual time and be tested at the start of the day before going to their normal timetabled lesson where their peers will join them gradually during the day.
- Once students are in the school building, we are following Government guidance in requesting everyone to wear a face covering at all times except when eating. Where a child may have a medical exemption, it is important that it is communicated to me directly.
- It is essential that all other aspects of our risk assessment are adhered to in the same way as we did in the Autumn term, when we had a very low incidence of positive Covid cases.

This includes everyone sanitising hands regularly and at the start of lessons and being mindful of respectful distancing. Ventilation will be another important aspect of our system of controls, as the research indicates that the newer Covid variants spread more readily via aerosol transmission. Windows will be open regularly and whenever possible. Even though we are getting into warmer weather, we are allowing students and staff to wear coats in the classroom should they need to.

As I said, there is much more detail on the school website regarding our system of controls and protocol for students and staff, and I would encourage all parents and carers to ensure that their children are familiar with it before their return to school. Time will also be set aside for students to discuss the arrangements with tutors and ask any questions they may have.

We've all lived through a challenging year and, to be sure, there are still challenges ahead, but I think we as a community have shown impressive flexibility and have adapted well. No doubt we will continue to do this. But our children have also learnt new skills that are very important in growing up and developing their character - helping at home, perseverance, self-motivation. In contrast to the sometimes negative dialogue about deficit and mental health problems, we want to celebrate what our children have achieved, and of course we know that these skills and attributes will stand them in good stead during the coming months and beyond.

When we return after Easter we will resume our MAST programme (Marden Achieving Success Together). This is a process of target setting and prioritising for future success that is underpinned by an extracurricular programme designed to provide extra support and build the confidence of students most in need. We hope to extend the extracurricular activities that are on offer, getting these up and running after Easter and all students will be welcome to take part.

Lots of our children have missed out on social interaction and now need time to help readjust and understand their experiences, whatever they were, positive and negative. Whatever they have been, it's important we help our students to own those experiences, and to help them to see how they can be useful in whatever they encounter in the future. The one-to-one conversations we will have as part of MAST will help with this.

Our focus in the coming weeks will be on enjoying being back in school, and on supporting excellent classroom learning, and in particular identifying how each child can best make good progress in the coming weeks and months.

I will leave you this week reiterating the trilogy that I hope all our students are familiar with:

- Show respect
- Take responsibility
- Focus on your learning

Above all, remember our school motto - Carpe Diem - seize the day, and make the most of every single one of them! We are very much looking forward to next week. See you all then.

Thank you for your continued support and take care.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'M. Snape'.

Mr M. Snape
Head Teacher