

26<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Following the Government announcement on Monday we are delighted to be able to welcome all students back to school on a full-time basis on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March. The school day will run from 9am-3pm. We are being asked to remind parents that this return to school is mandatory however we do understand that you may have ongoing concerns about the virus and the safety of your child. Unfortunately, unless we have confirmation from a medical professional that a child should not return to the site, we will need to follow usual absence procedures which may result in a non-authorised absence record. If you wish to discuss any concerns about your child's return to school please do contact one of the Headteachers or Mrs Routley who will be happy to assist.

In terms of measures being taken in school to manage the health and safety of the students and staff, the school will continue to be subject to thorough cleaning, maximum hygiene measures will be adhered to and everyone will be encouraged to wash their hands regularly. Communal, unventilated areas will remain out of use for the time being however we are pleased to say that we can begin to use the new creative hub for art lessons. We will also continue to only have necessary visitors on site e.g., social workers/physiotherapists. The school office will remain closed to anyone other than pre-arranged visitors so please do call or email reception if you would like to pass on a message.

Staff will be encouraged to wear masks in communal areas and visors in class, if they wish to, to ensure that students can still see their faces in order to aid communication. Students will not be expected to wear masks unless they wish to do so. Hand sanitiser will be available however staff will honour the wishes of parents who have expressed that they would prefer their child not to use this and parents are also welcome to send in their own hand washes/sanitisers if they prefer.

In terms of lateral flow testing we have been informed of the following by the DfE:

- All secondary age students (whose parents have given consent) will be tested at school 3 times from Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March.
- Following a negative result on the first test students will enter the main building.

- If the 2 subsequent tests are negative, students will then be provided with sufficient testing kits to test twice weekly at home going forward (initially we will provide enough to take us to the Easter break)
- Most of our students have been able to administer these tests themselves at school (with verbal support from staff) however we plan to provide a video with instructions for parents and also welcome any parents who wish to see the process in person to book an appointment to come into school during the first 3 on site tests to observe.
- If your child has a positive lateral flow test or becomes symptomatic at home (even if their lateral flow is negative) it is imperative that they stay at home and self-isolate for 10 days. We strongly advise that you book a PCR test before returning to school in order to allow us to make informed decisions about our actions at school. This is a key part of ensuring the safety of all and helping to keep the school open going forward.
- Equally if your child has a positive test or becomes symptomatic whilst at school, they will be isolated with a staff member and must be collected as soon as possible to return home and book a PCR tests. Transport will not agree to collect students who are symptomatic or whose lateral flow has tested positive.
- **To confirm lateral flow tests will only be only be administered to those students whose parents have provided written consent to Ms Morgan and these tests are voluntary.**
- Staff will take twice weekly home tests

For the time being, students who are not eligible for free school meals should continue to bring a packed lunch to school – this is due to our inability to use the hall space for serving and eating and we hope to review this as soon as we can.

On days when students have P.E they should continue to wear their kit for the full day to avoid creating traffic in the toilets during changing.

We are so looking forward to seeing all of our wonderful students back together on site and are prioritising ensuring that they all manage this transition as successfully as possible. We understand that some students may find this change challenging and are committed to working closely with parents to overcome any challenges so please do reach out to us with any concerns.

As ever, we thank you for your continued support during this time and for the many kind words we have received about our staff and their efforts since Christmas.

Best wishes

Verity Carnevale and Holly Bristow