

**Our Ref:** HeadteacherSA: parental ltrs/POS/JOD  
**Date:** 26<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

Following my letter earlier in the week, I am writing to confirm the plans for the return of students from 8<sup>th</sup> March. Students return will involve mass testing and this has been carefully planned so that we can administer the tests and support students in performing the tests and to offer support in general on their return.

### Asymptomatic tests (Covid-19)

Rapid testing using Lateral Flow Devices will support the return to face-to-face education by helping to identify students and staff who are infectious but do not have any symptoms. Once students have been tested 3 times in school, they will be provided with home test kits for regular testing. Testing remains voluntary but strongly encouraged by the DfE. Testing and return will be phased over the first week to manage the number of students passing through the test site. A separate letter from Miss Szymura will follow to outline full details of the testing plans.

### Timings when school returns

On return to school students will adhere to the staggered start and finish times that were put in place at the beginning of the academic year.

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
Mon – Thurs	8.40 – 2.50	8.55 – 3.00	8.40 – 2.50	8.55 – 3.00	9.10 – 3.10
Friday	8.40 – 2.25	8.55 – 2.35	8.40 – 2.25	8.55 – 2.35	9.10 – 2.45
Entrance	Rook Street	Yates Street	Yates Street	Rook Street	Rook Street

### Face masks in school

The guidance for school now states that there is an expectation that masks are worn in classrooms as well as other areas of the school where social distancing is difficult. Wearing masks in communal areas has been a feature in school for a long period of time now. The wearing of masks in classrooms will be reviewed at Easter and we will follow the advice and plan accordingly in the Summer term. Due to the increasing use of face coverings in wider society, staff and students are already likely to have access to face coverings. For students that lose or forget face coverings they are readily available from the school office. Some individuals may be exempt from wearing face coverings and those students have already been issued with an exempt pass. If any other issues arise students should speak with staff and in particular the pastoral team.

Wearing masks for long periods of time is not ideal but this measure will help further and add to the other measures we have in place to mitigate risks. Thanks for your support here and hopefully as the virus cases decrease the wearing of the face coverings in classroom will be removed as part of Public Health requirements. If this compromise, in the short term, allows students to return to face-to-face teaching the benefits for our students are clear.

### Systems of control/Test and Trace/isolations

Parent/Carers will need to **book a test** if your child has symptoms. The main symptoms are:

- a high temperature
- a new continuous cough
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste

Students must **self-isolate** and **not** come to school if:

- they develop symptoms
- they have been in close contact with someone who tests positive for Covid-19
- anyone in the household or support bubble develops symptoms
- they have travelled from another country outside the common travel area.
- they have been advised by NHS Test and Trace
- they have had a positive test

Following a positive test or close contacts, students must cease to attend school for at least 10 days from the day after: (contact the school if this is the case)

- the start of their symptoms
- the test date if they did not have any symptoms but have had a positive test

### **Prevention of Covid-19 in school**

I know I have shared this before but in order to minimise risk and create a safer environment we will:

1. Ensure everyone is advised to clean their hands thoroughly and more often than usual and be given the opportunity to do so.
2. Ensure face coverings are used in recommended circumstances.
3. Use bins with lids in classrooms for good hygiene.
4. Maintain enhanced cleaning of classroom areas.
5. Minimise contact using 'bubbles' across the site and stagger breaks and lunchtimes as well as the beginning and end of the school day.
6. Ventilate where possible.
7. Promote and engage in asymptomatic testing.
8. Ask students to remain at home with symptoms if Covid-19 and to isolate where relevant.

### **Pastoral support/Student wellbeing**

On return to school students will spend an extended period of time with their Form Tutors. Lessons and learning are important to us but this extra time will support students return in the first instance. Some students may be experiencing a variety of emotions in response to the pandemic. This extra pastoral time will:

- support the rebuilding of friendships and social engagement
- address and equip students to respond to issues linked to Covid-19
- support students with their approaches to improving physical and mental wellbeing

Finally, we are all looking forward to students return to school and I am sure we all agree in – school provision provides the building blocks for the future for all. Remote learning has been positive during the last couple of months but does not fully replicate school experiences. Thank you for all of your support during this period of time and we look forward to welcoming students back to school.

Please contact the school or email if you have any concerns.

Yours sincerely



D Postlethwaite  
Headteacher