

25 February 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Further to my letter yesterday, we have finalised our planning for the week commencing Monday 8th March to allow us to welcome back all students as safely as possible. We are all delighted that we will soon be fully open, once again.

We will be testing all students prior to any students returning to school. This will allow us to undertake the testing as swiftly as possible for all year groups and ensure that all students and all staff have had one test before returning.

It is important that we maximise the probability of remaining open for all students and ensure that we are not in a position where we have to immediately close classes or year groups where a student tests positive.

For example, without testing all year groups ahead of our full return, we may allow a student back to lessons from one year group, whose sibling in a different year group tests positive the following day. The first student may subsequently be infected by their sibling causing us to close down classes or year groups very quickly. Our approach means that we reduce this risk significantly.

Therefore, all students will be tested between Monday 8th March and Wednesday 10th March with all students returning to school on Thursday 11th March. Remote learning will continue for all students on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

We will test Years 11 and 7 on Monday 8th March, Years 10 and 9 on Tuesday 9th March and Year 8 on Wednesday 10th March. The precise timings and process will be outlined in a letter from our Operations Manager, Mrs Simpson, early next week, so that students know what time to arrive at school and where they will need to go for their test.

Whilst testing is not compulsory, I believe this is an important measure that we must take to protect our school community and our wider town community and families. I have been tested while at school over the last couple of months and it certainly makes me feel that I am helping to keep our community as safe as possible, knowing that if I tested positive, I would self-isolate. This would prevent me from infecting those around me at school who could become unwell or pass the virus on to more vulnerable members of our community or their families.

On Thursday 11th March, Years 7 and 8 will start at 8:30 with Years 9-11 starting at 8:35. Full details of the first day back and a reminder of our infection control measures will be sent in a letter to you next week.

Wearing of masks will remain compulsory in corridors and the Government has now stipulated that students must wear masks in classrooms as well. Please could you make sure that your child/children have a good supply of masks to bring to school. This is being reviewed by the Government at the end of term.

Following my letter this morning, Ofqual have just released the details for awarding grades for Year 11 this summer. I will write to you tomorrow to outline the implications of this for our students.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Hemmings', written in a cursive style.

Mr P. Hemmings  
Headteacher