

24th February 2021

Dear Parents,

Covid-19 Update: Return to School on 8th March

I hope that you and your families are safe and well. As we begin the new half term, I am very pleased to be writing to you following the Prime Minister's announcement that students will be allowed to return to school on Monday 8th March.

I know that this news will be greatly welcomed by parents, students and staff alike and I would like to thank you for your support since January whilst students have been learning from home. We have all managed very well over the Lockdown with learning progressing across all Year Groups and our Year 11 [and Year 13] students in good shape for whatever is ultimately announced about how qualifications will be awarded.

We should all be reassured and encouraged that the scientific and medical experts have concluded that it is now safe for children to return to school. It is so important to get students back into school before the Easter holidays so that we can continue to build the momentum of the school year and return to some normality after so long away.

With numbers of infections falling and the vaccination programme making good progress and reaching those most vulnerable to Covid-19, we can be hopeful that this stage of the pandemic is coming to an end. We must, of course, however, remain vigilant and continue to follow the guidelines that have become so routine across the school this academic year. Thus, social distancing will remain in place, face coverings must be worn indoors where social distancing cannot be maintained (including in classrooms) and students will continue to learn in their bubbles and self-isolate should they be in close contact with someone who tests positive for the virus.

It is important, as ever, that we all remain vigilant to the symptoms of Covid-19 even though the risk to young people is very small. There are things we can all do to help reduce the risk of getting ill with Covid-19:

- wash our hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds;
- use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available;
- wash our hands as soon as we get home;
- cover our mouth and nose with a tissue or our sleeve (not our hands) when we cough or sneeze;
- put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash our hands afterwards.

As you will recall, we now have the additional benefit of being able to test students three times for Covid-19 before they return to school. In doing so, we will be able to identify any students who are positive but asymptomatic and who need to self-isolate before returning to school. You can appreciate this is a big logistical task that requires careful planning.

I will write to you again by the end of the week with details of the consent forms and the days on which students can take their tests. We will be staggering the return of students between Monday the 8th and Wednesday the 10th to ensure the safety of all members of our community.

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Over the next two weeks, our remote learning programme will continue in full. Each day is vital in your child's education so it is very important that all students continue to work hard from home and keep up with their lessons and learning, attendance to lessons will continue to be monitored.

We look forward to welcoming students back to school and thank you again for everything you have been doing to encourage and support their learning from home.

Best wishes



Mr Freeman
Principal

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