



Friday 5 March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Return to School
Year 11 Ofqual Grade Awarding Update

We are looking forward to welcoming back all our students to school next week and this letter sets out some key information which will be useful to students, parents and carers.

Arrangements for COVID 19 Lateral Flow Device Testing

As previously communicated, we will be delivering a testing programme for students without coronavirus symptoms during the week commencing 8 March. This will use COVID-19 tests known as lateral flow devices. Up to one third of people who have coronavirus are asymptomatic. By testing we will help reduce the spread in school and beyond through asymptomatic transmission thereby enhancing safety among our community and families.

Students will return to school from the date set out below:

Monday 8 March Year 10 and 11 testing, back to school on Tuesday
Tuesday 9 March Year 7 and 9 testing, back to school on Wednesday
Wednesday 10 March Year 8 testing, back to school on Thursday

Individual test times have been communicated separately via text message.

School will remain open for children of critical workers and vulnerable children throughout the week commencing 8 March.

Students should continue to complete the work set for them by their teachers as part of our remote learning provision until their return to school.

Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff. Results will be emailed to students' school email address. If a student tests positive, you will be contacted by school staff. In line with national guidance, the pupil will need to stay at home and self-isolate for ten days. If your child has had Covid-19 in the last 90 days then they will not require a test.

This testing programme at school is for people with no symptoms. If your child develops symptoms at any time (including a high temperature; a new, continuous cough; or a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste) they must immediately self-isolate, and book a test by calling 119 or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>

Year Group 'Bubbles'

In line with government guidance, the school plan for re-opening is based on the following key principles:





- a requirement that people who are ill stay at home;
- robust hand and respiratory hygiene;
- enhanced cleaning arrangements;
- mass asymptomatic testing;
- active engagement with NHS Test and Trace and reducing contacts between those in school wherever possible to minimise potential for infection.

In order to achieve this, we have timetabled year group 'bubbles'.

- Years 7, 8 and 9 each have their own 'tutor group base' in a classroom. When accessing specialist teaching such as PE lessons their movement will be supervised.
- Years 10 and 11 are based in the West Wing and also have supervised access to specialist classrooms for options subjects.

All teaching spaces and entry points are well equipped with hand sanitiser dispensers and students will be reminded to use them regularly. Room lay-out with forward facing desks, floor marking, signage and supervision will reinforce safe spacing. Once in school, students will be based in one of our designated year group zones and teachers will move to students. Arrangements are in place for enhanced cleaning of all teaching spaces.

The school day

We will continue to operate a staggered start and end of day as follows:

- Year 8 and 10 arrive for 8.35am
- Years 7, 9 and 11 arrive for 8.55am

At the end of the day:

- Year 8 and 10 leave at 3.05pm
- Years 7 and 9 leave at 3.25pm
- Year 11 leave at 4.15pm

Uniform and equipment

We expect students to be in full school uniform. Sharing of equipment requires careful management by subject staff and so, to keep this to a minimum, it is important that students come to school fully equipped with their own school bag. Students should ideally stock their pencil case with pens, pencils, eraser, ruler, glue stick, scientific calculator, and highlighters.

Face Masks

Government guidance on face masks has changed. Students will be expected to wear a face mask during movement on corridors and in classrooms where social distancing is not possible. The government have informed schools that this advice will be reviewed at the end of term. For this reason, it is expected that parents provide students with a face mask. When removing face coverings pupils must wash their hands immediately beforehand and dispose of temporary face coverings in a covered bin or place reusable face coverings in a sealable plastic bag, and then wash their hands again.





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Behaviour

As we prepare to return and open the school to all students, it is important that student behaviour and compliance with health and safety rules is excellent. Our behaviour and discipline policy sets out our expected standards. All students returning to school will have an induction and our procedures for operating safely will be clearly explained. Failure to abide by the rules and guidance on safety and social distancing will be considered a serious breach of the behaviour policy.

Ofqual & Grade Awarding 2021 Year 11

Ofqual and the DfE published their plan for grade awarding at the end of last week and we would like to set out clearly how the process will work so that all our students, parents and carers have the reassurance they need. Students will be graded by teacher judgment and not graded by an algorithm.

Schools have until 18 June to determine and register teacher assessed grades with the examination boards. School assessments can continue throughout the period up to the final moderation and grade entry so that there is plenty of time for students to demonstrate what they know and can do. Students will only be assessed on what they have been taught and teachers will tell students what evidence is used to arrive at the final grade. A range of evidence will be used including teachers' continuous assessment over time as well as mock examinations. No single piece of evidence will be a limiting factor in the determination of a grade and teachers will work hard to support all students to do their best.

Students, parents and carers will be kept well informed about progress. Details of our final Year 11 Parents Evening will be circulated in a separate communication.

The GCSE Examination Results Days will be held (hopefully in school) on Thursday 12th August.

What to do if you are unwell/Quarantined

Students, parents, carers or visitors, must not come to school if they are displaying any symptoms of coronavirus. Details of the procedures to follow can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>. If a student at school presents with symptoms, then they will be looked after in isolation and parents and carers contacted to collect them. Students who have recently returned from a country included in the government's quarantine regulations should not attend school until their period of quarantine is complete.

Finally, we would once again like to take this opportunity to thank everyone in our community for your help and support over the past several months. We are very much looking forward to welcoming students back to school. If you have any questions or need any further information or support, please do not hesitate to contact us by telephone or email.

Best wishes and stay safe,

Mrs Katie Roberts
Headteacher



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