

26<sup>th</sup> February 2021

## Re-opening Spring 2

Dear parent/carer,

As we quickly approach the re-opening and return to the academy, I wanted first to extend my gratitude for the support our families have shown during this lockdown period. I also wanted to praise our wonderful students and staff for their efforts during this period. I am particularly proud of the progress we have made this academic year with our digital and remote learning strategy. It truly has been a team effort and I hope the levels of support given by the academy has made things a little easier for you at home during this period, as well as importantly helping ensure our students continue their learning journey with the least disruption possible.

The purpose of this letter is to outline our plans for the return of our students since the latest government announcement. Here, it is important to highlight a few key points about re-opening since this latest lockdown. First, safety is paramount, in which we demand higher expectations of our students regarding the safety measures put in place at the academy. Therefore, we will need to be patient and operate with caution regarding our plans to reopen. Second, it is pivotal that we support our students from the disruption and potential effects another lockdown has had on our students and wider community. Therefore, I wanted to stress that our priority over the coming weeks is to have a smooth transition whereby we relieve the pressure of our students and help initiate the joy of learning at the academy.

To support this transition, we will be putting together a programme before classroom teaching commences. This will include the following:

- **Mass testing that will commence from Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March**, in which all students in Y7-13 will take three COVID-19 tests as they return to school. These three tests will be carried out at school and I will be outlining plans for this below. After the initial programme of three tests in school, **students will be provided with two rapid tests to use each week at home, we will be providing clear NHS instructions for the home testing programme as this time approaches**. More information will be communicated regarding this at a later date. I firmly believe that this will help significantly with keeping our students safe and to support with minimising disruption to their education.
- **A pastoral programme will be delivered by their tutors** to help support students with their transition back into the academy and 'normal' methods of learning. Ultimately, our aim is to foster a sense of togetherness, support and highlight the positives of being back together at the academy where we can begin the next phase in our journey together.



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Return to academy schedule

Week commencing 1<sup>st</sup> March

Year Group	1.3.21	2.3.21	3.3.21	4.3.21	5.3.21
7	Live Lessons	Live Lessons	Live Lessons	Test 1 & Remote Learning	Inset Day
8				Test 1 & Live Lessons	
9			Test 1 & Live Lessons		
10					
11					
12					
13					

Week commencing 8<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> March

Year Group	8.3.21	9.3.21	10.3.21	11.3.21	12.3.21		15.3.21	16.3.21
7	Remote Learning	Remote Learning	Test 2 & Remote Learning	1 <sup>st</sup> day in school	Normal teaching		Test 3 & normal teaching	Normal teaching
8			Test 2 & Remote learning	1 <sup>st</sup> day in school	Remote Learning		Test 3 & normal teaching	
9		Test 2 & Remote Learning						
10								
11								
12	Test 2 & Remote Learning	1st day in school	Remote Learning	Test 3 & Tutor Groups in school	Normal teaching		Normal teaching	
13								

We have decided to start our mass testing of students next week as we believe this will be safer and enable us to resume normal classroom teaching more quickly. Some key points regarding this process are outlined below:

- **Next week your child will come into the academy for their COVID-19 'Test 1'** and they will be in the building for no more than 30 minutes on this day. Students will be **required to attend their "live lessons" before and after** taking their test on day specified for their year group.
- Your child's time will be communicated via text message, and we will also place this information on your child's MS Teams year group page.



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- Times will be allocated by tutor group and you will receive a text by **17:00 on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> February.**
- We expect all students to **wear a face covering** except those who are medically exempt.
- All students must ensure they **hand sanitise** on entry and always **maintain a 2-metre distance.**
- We ask for your support in ensuring that students **only attend school at their allocated test time,** arriving promptly to support us with the schedule and **demonstrate highest levels of professionalism.**
- Patience will be required as we are entering a new area regarding mass testing and although we have carried out weekly COVID-19 tests with students in our community classrooms it has been on a far smaller scale.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank parents/carers for their response to our requests for testing consent, this has helped us to put plans in place quickly, aiding timely communication. Those families that have not provided consent, I strongly encourage you to reconsider the role regular testing will play in helping our community be safer from COVID-19 transmission.

There will be further communication regarding the specific programme your child will receive during the week commencing 8<sup>th</sup> March, as well as receiving further information about our expectations for our students.

Finally, I want to offer reassurance about the future, especially due to the constant rhetoric about the need for “catch up”. I appreciate that this, and the wider context that COVID-19 has indeed created unnecessary pressure on our students and families. It is important that we acknowledge that we simply have new starting points, which will result in the same destinations, albeit with a slightly different trajectory to previous years. Therefore, I encourage you to have faith that the disturbances to your child’s education and development will be corrected over time.

Please do contact us if you have any questions regarding testing or anything about our plans for reopening.

Yours sincerely

Morgan Haines  
Principal