



26th February 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

I hope you and your family are well. Following on from my update earlier this week, I would like to take the opportunity to provide you with some further details regards the return of your child to school from Monday 8th March. Please can I reassure you that we have been following all Government guidance to the letter to ensure the wider opening of school is as safe as possible for all concerned. This update provides more specific detail on the testing process, along with the return dates for different year groups as they come back to school.

Testing

On their return to school, all pupils will be offered the opportunity to take three rapid tests over the first two weeks. After the initial programme of three tests in school, students will be provided with two rapid tests each week to use at home. Testing using Lateral Flow Device's helps to identify asymptomatic cases (people displaying no symptoms) and suppress the transmission of the virus in school. Anyone who does test positive will be required to self-isolate for 10 days in line with Government guidance. It is important to note that testing is voluntary but we strongly encourage children to get tested.

A further email will be sent later today that explains the testing process in greater depth and is accompanied by a consent form and privacy notice. We will only be able to test your child if you have provided the school with your consent. You will have to provide consent by 8am on Wednesday 3rd March 2021. The information sent later today will provide a link to an online consent form that will enable you to let us know if you would like your child to be included in the testing programme.

Return dates

In line with Government guidance we will be phasing the return of pupils during the week of the 8th March. It is vitally important that the first test is administered whilst all students maintain a 2 metre distance until the result has been confirmed. This will help ensure we minimise the need to instruct another individual, class, or year group to immediately self-isolate for 10 days after they have returned to school should a positive case be identified. As soon as a negative result has been confirmed then a pupil can join their lesson. Therefore, children will be returning on the following days to ensure we make the correct logistical arrangements to meet all Public Health England expectations.

Monday 8 th March	Year 11, 12 & 13
Tuesday 9 th March	Year 10
Wednesday 10 th March	Year 9
Thursday 11 th March	Year 8
Friday 12 th March	Year 7

Whilst children remain at home until their designated start date, we will continue to provide work through Show My Homework and Microsoft Teams in line with existing arrangements.

Headteacher:
Mr R Lycett

Wolverhampton Road, Stafford, ST17 9DJ

Tel: (01785) 258383

Email: office@smhs.staffs.sch.uk

Children who are being tested on their designated start date will be given a specific time to arrive at school between 8.30am and 10.30am for their test. After the test has hopefully confirmed a negative result, the individual will be able to move to a classroom and will be supervised by their teacher. Any pupil who is not involved in the testing process should arrive at school at 11.00am on their designated start date. Lessons will begin at 11.10am on each start day with period 3 being the first face to face lesson for all. After the initial start date for each year group, pupils will arrive at school at the times established during the Autumn Term.

For any children eligible for Free School Meals, a £3 supermarket voucher will be provided per child for each day they continue to work from home during the week of the 8th March. For example, a Year 8 children who returns to school on Thursday 11th March, will receive a £9 voucher for the 3 days they have been working from home that week. Supermarket vouchers will be distributed next week and parents will be informed when they have been issued.

We do fully appreciate that you and your child will be eager to return to school at the earliest opportunity. I am sure that you will understand it is important we do follow all the guidance precisely so that this is done in the safest possible way. Phasing the return of pupils through the week has been confirmed by the Government as the best way to achieve this aim.

Face coverings, Attendance & Exams

On their return to school, all children will be expected to wear a face covering inside the building including lessons. Please ensure your child has a sufficient supply of face coverings for them to use. If your child is exempt from wearing a face covering then we would ask you to contact the school next week so we can issue them with an exemption card on their return.

It has been made very clear by the Government that attendance will be mandatory from the start date identified for each year group. We appreciate that some children may be feeling very anxious about the return to school for lots of different reasons. We would urge you to contact us at school if this is the case to discuss how we can support you and your child.

The Government announced yesterday the principles behind how exam grades will be awarded this summer. We are really pleased to hear that students will receive grades determined by teachers, with pupils only assessed on what they have been taught. We believe that the approach will allow pupils to receive the grades they deserve despite the school closures. This should also mean that we can support each pupil's progression to the next phase of their education. We will communicate more details with families next week once we have further information. In the meantime, the best thing the pupils can do is to complete all work set by their teachers in preparation for when grades are awarded.

I will be in touch again next week with more information that will remind you of the existing safety arrangements for when your child returns to school. You can still find all previous guidance on the COVID page of our [website](#). Please do not hesitate to contact us at school if you have any questions. Look after yourselves and have a good weekend.

Yours sincerely



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Headteacher

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