

Our Ref: PRC/EMH

26 February 2021

Dear Parents/Students,

As you will already be aware, it has been announced that students in secondary schools can return to school from March 8th. This is brilliant news and staff are delighted to be able to resume face to face education. However, the return to school is considerably more complex on this occasion due to the requirement for schools to test all students who consent before they return to the classroom, and then on two further occasions, before home testing commences. Thankfully, yesterday we received confirmation from the Government that we no longer have to wait until 8th March to start testing, thereby allowing us to get students back at the earliest possible date given the testing site daily capacity.

To give you as much advanced warning as possible the dates for testing and then subsequent return to classrooms are below. Further details will be released on Monday regarding exact timeslots and logistics. Remote Education will continue for each year group until they are back in school.

	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13
Testing day	10 th March	8 th March	4 th March	9 th March	5 th March
Return to school	11 th March	9 th March	8 th March	10 th March	8 th March

Testing

A huge amount of work has taken place over the last few weeks to facilitate this and as with everything over the last 12 months things have been fast changing in this area. We have converted our Gym into a mass testing centre, ordered a variety of equipment, waded through guidance and trained numerous volunteers. The testing has taken place successfully for a number of weeks now for those students and staff who have been on site.

The testing of students is part of the measures put into place to keep the school as safe an environment as possible for all students and staff. Testing is voluntary but strongly encouraged by the Government. For students to participate in the testing programme we must have received a completed consent form. We have already sent you a text message and link relating to this and information about the testing process can be found on Frog. If you wish your child to participate in the testing programme we do need to receive your consent form as soon as possible and at the very latest by Wednesday 3rd March.

The students of parents who do not wish to consent will return on their allocated year group day as normal.

Safety Measures

Protocols and procedures on site will be very similar to the Autumn Term. However, all students will be required to wear face coverings in lessons and in social spaces inside the building, unless

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exempt, in which case they would need to see a member of pastoral staff for a pass. Public Health will review with health experts whether these measures can be eased in the summer term.

The addition of the above safety measure and regular testing will no doubt make the school even safer, but it is also vital that students stick to all previous measures too.

This includes not attending school if they, or a member of their household has Covid symptoms. All the other measures of hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene and distancing should also be observed wherever possible.

Despite the additional measures we are likely to have further disruption as schools return. Thanks in advance for your understanding when we have to abruptly send students home when they have been identified as a close contact of a positive case.

Awarding of Grades-Year 13 and Year 11

The best way to summarise the announcements this week is through a useful Infographic:

[Please click here to view Infographic download](#)

I appreciate this does not answer all of the questions that I am sure many of you have. As will all of these things the devil is in the detail regarding what schools can use as evidence so we still await the Awarding Body and Regulatory guidance. Our advice remains unchanged, students will be doing some form of assessment in every subject on your return and this will probably be ongoing until May half term. Keep working hard so we have all the evidence we need when it comes to submitting grades.

Careers Week

Next week is National Careers Week - an opportunity for our students to think about their next steps and explore future career ideas. As part of this, we would like to encourage you to browse the Virtual Careers Fair available on <https://ncw2021.co.uk/> as well as take a look at The Parents Guide to National Careers Week which is available on our website: <https://www.gosforthacademy.org.uk/curriculum/careers>

Further progression resources, opportunities and links continue to be posted regularly on our @gosforthacademyfutures Instagram and @gosforthfutures Twitter accounts. We hope this helps inspire and motivate our students to continue to work towards building their futures beyond the disruption of Covid.

Finally

Many thanks for the ongoing kind messages to the staff, which are always greatly appreciated. Please rest assured that we want to manage the return to school as safely as possible. I really appreciate your support and flexibility as we continue to work through the daily, sometimes hourly, changes in guidance.

Have a great weekend.

Yours faithfully



Mr Chahal
Principal