



Tuesday 23 February 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

RE: School Reopening

I am sure that by now you are aware of the Government's 4 step plan to ease lockdown in England which outlines the stages of returning to some forms of normality. Further information of this process can be found via the following link [COVID-19 Response - Spring 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/covid-19/roadmap)

I hope that the announcement regarding the reopening of schools from Monday 8 March 2021 has come as a welcome one – I know I speak on behalf of all staff across that Trust when I say that we are delighted to soon be welcoming our learners back through our doors.

Reopening

Whilst we are thrilled that face to face teaching will soon resume, there is immense planning that continues to take place behind the scenes to ensure that our schools remain a safe and compliant environment for all our learners upon their return. The Government has outlined that schools with secondary aged learners (Year 7 upwards) have discretion on how to phase the return of their learners to allow for schools to conduct Lateral Flow Testing (LFT). Secondary aged learners will receive 3 LFTs in their school setting, upon their return, each test taking place 3 to 5 days apart. Further specific details will be communicated from your child's specific school regarding their plans for testing and the phased return of learners.

Primary and First schools will reopen for all learners from Monday 8 March 2021.

All early year's settings will continue to remain open.

Testing

Staff across all of our schools will continue to be tested twice a week.

Secondary aged learners will also be tested twice a week using home test kits, after completing their 3 LFTs in their school setting.

Additional Measures

Staff and students from Year 7 upwards are advised to wear face coverings in all areas, including:

- classrooms, **where social distancing cannot be maintained** unless where wearing a face covering would impact on the ability to take part in exercise or strenuous activity, for example in **PE lessons**, or for those who are **exempt** from wearing a face covering as set out in Government guidance
- moving around premises
- outside classrooms
- in corridors



- in communal areas

In Primary / First schools, it is recommended that face coverings should be worn by staff in situations where social distancing cannot be maintained. Children in primary schools do not need to wear face coverings.

Bubbles

All schools across the Trust have been directed to resume the use of learner 'bubbles' to mitigate against the risk of contact.

Prevention Measures

Whilst it is welcomed news that the spread of the virus is slowing, may I take this opportunity to remind you of the importance of us all working together to further limit the spread. Learners must stay at home if they have any of the three key COVID-19 symptoms:

- a high temperature
- a persistent cough
- loss of smell or taste

In Addition:

- Learners must stay at home if any member of their household has any of these symptoms and await the outcome of the test result of that household member
- Learners should also stay at home and isolate for 10 days if they have been a close contact of a positive case
- Learners will be sent home if they display any of these symptoms inside school

We can further mitigate against the risks of the virus by continuing to:

- Wash hands frequently
- Wear a face covering
- Maintain social distancing

It goes without saying that the Trust are acutely aware that the current situation remains fluid and will require continual review. Risk Assessments and COVID-19 control measures will be repeatedly revised, and we will of course keep you informed about further developments and will provide further correspondence as and when necessary.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation with these measures to ensure our learners, families and the wider community is kept safe, and for your patience awaiting further correspondence from your specific school settings regarding their plans for reopening.

Our staff look forward to welcoming our learners back to school in due course.

Yours sincerely,

GAVIN BALL
Chief Executive