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AGS / zmb

3rd March 2021

Dear parents/carers,

I am now writing to you with further details regarding the reopening of schools next week. I am sorry for the short notice, which is due to circumstances beyond the school's control, as various external agencies are involved in the arrangements outlined below. Even now, there is the possibility that arrangements may change; however, I wanted to give you as much information as possible, and as soon as possible.

The School will re-open on 8th March with a phased return of year groups; listed below are the dates for each year group:

Monday 8 th March	Years 7, 12 and 13
Tuesday 9 th March	Year 10
Wednesday 10 th March	Year 11
Monday 15 th March	Years 8 and 9

Each year group will be in school every day from the date of their return. Attendance is mandatory from the dates above, unless students are shielding and are designated as being clinically extremely vulnerable (in which case, parents need to send a copy of the shielding letter to the school office, please).

The school day will remain as it was from September to January, with the school gates opening at 8.15am each day; the holding areas, staggered finishes and other timings of the day will not change.

As year groups will be returning to school on the above phased basis, students waiting to return will have remote learning set on Teams using our current approaches, until the date of their return to school.

Covid 19 Testing - Before Your Child Returns to School

In common with other Southend schools, we are asking all pupils and staff to access a lateral flow test at their local community testing site before they return to school. Please ensure that you take your son or daughter to one of your local community testing sites for a lateral flow test, which is for people without symptoms. This test should be no more than 3 days before your child's date of return, as listed at the top of this letter.

Families that live in other local authorities outside of the Southend area should contact those authorities in order to locate their nearest testing site.

Please then report this outcome on the Student COVID Test Outcome Form:

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=ch8ZOGkbAECpwraPTJTyDU0UB-o8589LrAygznemJ_FURTBCTjNMOFVYVUVaWVVKTUVHOTNLWjgyVC4u

It is essential that we have a 100% return please, so that we know who has been tested and who has not. Due to a change in national guidance, students who have tested positive previously should not test with either PCR or rapid lateral flow test for 90 days unless they become symptomatic.

There is an option on the Student COVID Test Outcome Form to say that your child has not been tested, and this will not prevent his/her return to school, though we strongly encourage you to have your child tested, for the benefit of the wider school community.

Covid 19 Testing - After Your Child Returns to School

Students who have consent from parents/carers will then be able to access two subsequent tests within the first two weeks during their school day. Students will be given a registration card for the test on their first day in school, which they will bring home for parents to complete. The card needs to be completed immediately and carried by the child to hand in when going to the test centre. Staff will walk with each teaching group to the testing site in University Square, Southend. The whole class will go to the testing site, regardless of whether they are being tested, so that the school can supervise and account for all students.

Along with this letter, you will receive:

- a document from St Bernard's giving more details about the testing process, which should inform your consent for testing,
- a letter from the local authority explaining their approach,
- instructions on how to undertake the test at home – ready for when home testing kits are issued, and
- a privacy notice which explains how test-related data will be handled.

You can give your consent for your child to be tested using the following link:

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=ch8ZOGkbAECpwraPTJTyDU0UB-o8589LrAygznemJ_FUMU5SNVhDNVIZNFQwQIk2WIZWTFc4UU1QTI4u

Following these tests, students will then be given tests to conduct at home. Where students are unable to undertake tests at home, there is an option on this form to let the school know.

Face Coverings

Currently, where pupils in year 7 (which would be children who were aged 11 on 31 August 2020) and above are educated, it is recommended that face coverings should be worn by adults and pupils when moving around the premises, outside of classrooms, such as in corridors and communal areas where social distancing cannot easily be maintained. Face coverings do not need to be worn by pupils when outdoors on the premises. In addition, it is also now recommended that face coverings should be worn in classrooms or during other school activities unless social distancing can be maintained. It is possible in larger classrooms for the teacher to maintain social distancing, and not wear a face covering; however, it is likely that in most classrooms the students will probably be seated too close together, and will be expected to wear face coverings. This does not

apply in situations where wearing a face covering would impact on the ability to take part in exercise or strenuous activity, for example in PE lessons.

We will therefore encourage all students to wear face coverings in class and in communal areas of the school. As before, those who are medically exempt will wear yellow lanyards, to avoid constant challenges by staff and other students.

Concluding Thoughts

As before, the guidance changes quickly, and there are discrepancies between ministerial announcements and DfE guidance. Therefore, please expect to see changes as we receive further guidance.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'AS', written in a cursive style.

Mr A Sharpe
Headteacher