



2<sup>nd</sup> March 2021

Dear families,

I do hope you are well.

I am sure you will have heard the Government's announcement that schools will be open fully in England from the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

As you are aware the vast majority of our students have continued to attend school throughout the pandemic, and therefore this announcement will not be a significant change in practice for us.

All year 7 and above students have previously been invited to participate in routine lateral flow testing and we continue to encourage those who are able to. I am sure you have also seen that the Government are now recommending the use of face coverings for students in the classroom. This will both remain a personal decision and judgement for families, as we are aware of the many implications for our students in respect of this advice. All our previous control measures will remain in place, including bubbles and timings whilst we consider our next steps in line with both local and national data and transition to what could be described as the *new normal* between now and September.

It might be reassuring for you to know that the majority of staff in our school have also received the first dose of the vaccine, and there is promising early evidence from Public Health-England that having the vaccine can reduce transmission as well as reducing the severity of symptoms. In addition, the majority of our staff are also participating in routine lateral flow testing.

We have been notified today that families of children attending all schools are able to request home testing kits direct from the Government. Please use this link should you wish to order [Rapid lateral flow testing for households and bubbles of school pupils and staff - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/rapid-lateral-flow-testing-for-households-and-bubbles-of-school-pupils-and-staff)

We must remember too that for most children, Public Health advises that COVID 19 is a very mild illness. I have enclosed a guide for families which I hope is useful.

We look forward to a slow and considered approach to reducing the need for such protective measures as immunity builds through the vaccination programme. Like yourselves, we are looking forward to brighter times ahead, and are already considering how we might bring our community together to celebrate the work and resilience shown by our students, families, and the staff team.

Thank you.

Best wishes,

**Sue Ackroyd**  
**Principal**

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