

24th February 2021

Full Reopening of Schools Week beginning 8th March 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing with further details about arrangements for the return of all students to school during the week beginning 8th March 2021. A safe return is our main priority and the arrangements we have put in place mean that we can get students back into classrooms in a way that minimises the risk of transmission as far as we possibly can.

We continue to abide by the system of controls set out in the government guidance and the key elements of staying safe in school remain; social distancing (where possible) and good hand hygiene. Alongside this we will continue to operate in bubbles/year group teaching zones as well as maintaining the staggered start/end to the day and the arrangements to keep bubbles separate during breaks and lunchtimes.

In addition to the measures that have proven effective so far, we will also be asking students to wear face coverings in lessons in line with the guidance published by the government on 22nd February 2021. We recognise that this can feel uncomfortable and is far from ideal, but it will further reduce the risk of transmission in school of a virus that is now much more transmissible than was the case in the early stages of the pandemic. The rules around face coverings are straightforward in that they must be worn at all times in the building unless there is an exemption for your child. Your child should also put on their face covering prior to coming through the school gates in the morning. Please ensure that your child brings their own face covering to school as we have already spent nearly £2000 providing masks to students.

As time progresses it becomes more difficult to maintain these measures, but with the prevalence of the variant identified prior to Christmas these measures and the enhanced use of face coverings become even more important. Students will be reminded of the systems we have to keep everyone safe and will advise them of the new measures that are in place until the Easter holidays in the first instance.

The final measure is the testing of all students as they return to school using Lateral Flow Tests which provide results within 30 minutes. It is widely known that these tests are not as sensitive as the PCR tests that take place at testing centres, but they will nevertheless identify any asymptomatic individual who has a high viral load at the time of testing. The use of tests is therefore another measure that will reduce the risk of transmission in school. Arrangements for testing are as follows:

- We are currently asking parents for their consent to test their child when they return to school. Parents who have already signed a consent due to their child being in school at the moment do not need to do so again. The consent form can be found [here](#).
- You will receive notification early next week of the day and time when your child can return to school for their first test.
- Following their first test students will wait in a covid secure classroom until their test results have been confirmed.
- If the result is negative your child will then go straight to lessons.
- If the result is positive you will be contacted by the school in the first instance.
- There is no requirement to wait for a negative test result before returning to classrooms after the 2nd and 3rd tests.
- Following the 3rd test, all tests will be taken at home and we will share more details of this when we have them.

Telephone · 0191 296 1432

Preston Road · North Shields · Tyne and Wear · NE29 9PU

jschs.office@ntl.org.uk · www.johnspence.org.uk



• F I T F O R L I F E •



We feel that this is the best way for us to ensure the safest possible return to school, but it will mean that we have a staggered return throughout the week beginning 8th March as the logistics of testing nearly 1000 people is quite challenging! Each year group will return on the following date and each student will be given a precise time of when they should arrive at the main school entrance on that day for their first test. If your child is not being tested they should still only arrive at the time stated and will be asked to wait until their test cohort have had their results before going to their classroom.

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

Unfortunately, this will mean remote learning continuing for some students for slightly longer and details of how this works will be sent out next week along with further details about what we are doing to help students with the transition back to school life and face to face learning. All our procedures are in line with the guidance provided to school this week by the DfE.

Whilst there is definitely light at the end of the tunnel, we remain in very challenging times and as a school we are doing all that we can to ensure that we keep everyone in our community as safe as possible. Please do contact us if you would like any further information and look out for further updates on Friday and during next week as we get ready to welcome our students back to school.

Best wishes

Jonathan