

Dear Parent/Carer

RE: Pupils return to school from the 8th of March

Following the announcement made by the Government on 22nd February regarding the return to school of all pupils, I am writing to confirm these arrangements and to explain our approach to the reopening of our school.

All pupils can return to school from the week commencing the 8th of March and schools have been given flexibility as to exactly which days during that week the pupils can return, to allow for mass testing. We will continue to implement our Covid-19 safety measures that were in place before the recent lockdown such as year group bubbles; year group zones; staggered start, lunch and finish times; the wearing of masks in communal areas and regular handwashing routines.

Face masks

Updated Government guidance states that pupils need to wear masks in classrooms where they cannot socially distance. Therefore, **face masks will be worn everywhere inside the school building, including in classrooms.** Masks don't need to be worn when doing PE outside or in the Sports Hall, or if pupils are outside at break or lunch. Please ensure your child brings a mask, a spare and a small sealable plastic bag to store it in.

Testing

We are required to test those pupils, who have provided consent, for Covid-19 using the Lateral Flow Device test. Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff. The 'lateral flow' tests are quick and easy using a swab of your tonsils and nostrils. We are required to test pupils three times with a gap of 3 to 5 days in between each test.

Test 1 will involve students coming to school for a test, on an allocated day and time, and leaving straight afterwards with a view to starting school fully the next day following a negative test result. Remote learning will be provided until pupils can attend school fully. The schedule below illustrates how testing will work:

Year group	Test window	Start school
Y11	Mon 8 th March 8am - 11am	Return to school Tues 9 th March
Y10	Mon 8 th March 12pm - 3pm	Return to school Tues 9 th March
Y7	Tues 9 th March 8am – 11am	Return to school Weds 10 th March
Y8	Tues 9 th March 12am – 3pm	Return to school Weds 10 th March
Y9	Weds 10 th March 8am – 11am	Return to school Thurs 11 th March

For example, Year 11 pupils will be tested between 8am and 11am on Monday 8th March. They will be given an individual test appointment time within the test window for their year group, conduct the test and go straight home. We will contact you regarding the test result. If the result is negative, Year 11 pupils will attend school on Tuesday 9th of March at the usual time, following their usual timetable.

If the test result is positive, your child and everyone in your household will have to self-isolate for 10 days. If anyone in your household develops symptoms they must arrange a test immediately.

You should also ensure that your child registers the test using the instructions given on the test card they receive. The test needs to be registered with the NHS Test and Trace system so that you can receive notification of the results via text and email. We strongly recommend you do this.

Tests 2 and 3 will take place when students have returned to school, no later than 5 days after test 1. Pupils will be escorted down to the Main Hall (where the testing centre is located) to undertake their test and will return to lesson straight after. Any pupil that tests positive will be notified discreetly by a member of the senior leadership team and arrangements will be made for the pupil to leave site and self-isolate.

After this round of testing, pupils will be expected to test themselves at home using the home testing kits provided by school. More information about this will follow.

Please note that our Critical Worker and Vulnerable Children Provision will continue as normal. Pupils in this group, where consent has already been given, will be tested the week beginning 8th of March in school.

Further information about LFD testing, the online consent form and a video walk through of the test process can be found on our school website www.HGCSC.co.uk

Our approach to the return to school

We are really proud of how our pupils have engaged with Home Learning, and are grateful for your support during the lockdown, however we are mindful of the amount of time they have spent at home, away from their friends, peers and teachers. We will therefore dedicate time within our existing curriculum to allow our pupils and staff to reconnect and rebuild existing strong relationships. All pupils will spend their first full day in school completing activities with a focus on reconnection; safety procedures and expectations; well-being; social reintegration; careers; aspirations and the future.

Our PE provision will take place outdoors and include an element of team building and fitness/stamina activities. I am a firm believer that our pupils need to spend as much time outside as possible. Therefore, I ask for your support in ensuring that your child has appropriate outdoor PE clothing, footwear, and a lightweight waterproof jacket to enable them to be outside should it rain. Pupils should continue to come to school in their PE kit on the days they have PE (as they did before). In order to avoid pupils wearing wet or muddy clothes for the remainder of the day, they will now need to bring their uniform with them in order to change after their PE lessons.

We will resume our extra-curricular timetable from the 15th of March; students will need to sign up to the activities on offer as the numbers are limited for each activity.

Please find below the details of extra-curricular opportunities in PE, Music and Drama.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Music	Y7 Choir Gym	Y10 Choir/Intervention (alternate weeks) Room 304	Y8 Choir	Y8 Brass Group	
PE	Y8 Badminton Y8 Football	Y7 Badminton Y7 Football Y7 Trampolining	Y10 Badminton Y10 Football	Y9 Badminton Y9 Football	Y11 Badminton Y11 Football
Drama	Y11 club/ performances	Y8 Drama Club	Y7 Drama Club	Year 9 Drama Club	

We look forward to seeing all our pupils on their return and hope that the most difficult times are behind us. There is plenty of hard work still to do but I believe there is light at the end of the tunnel and we can start to look forward, together.

Please contact the school if you have any questions or require any further information.

Yours sincerely



Mr N Parker
Headteacher

Frequently Asked Questions

What if I haven't provided consent for my child to be tested?

You can provide consent by visiting the school website and completing the online form. If you do not wish for your child to be tested, they will return to school with their year group on the allocated day in the table above.

Are the LFD tests accurate?

LFD tests identify individuals who are likely to be infectious. These individuals tend to spread the virus to many people and so identifying by LFD remains important. It is important to remember that these tests are an additional layer of health protection measure alongside face coverings, social distancing and handwashing.

How do the LFD tests work?

Your child will need to follow the instructions provided by the test assistant. Your child will be provided with a swab that they need to rub against their tonsils and insert into one nostril. The swab is then placed in a solution that is then added onto a test cartridge. After 30 minutes the result of the test will be provided.

Do I need to register with NHS test and trace?

Yes. Please use the test registration card given at the time of the test to access the appropriate website and complete the relevant details.

What if someone tests positive on a lateral flow test?

If the LFD test returns a positive result the household will have to self-isolate for 10 days from the date of the positive test.

What happens if the test is negative?

Students will be able to return to school and resume their activities as normal. A small number of individuals may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason. A negative LFD result should not be read as a means to relax or ignore social distancing or other virus prevention measures.

What if I am identified as a close contact of a positive test?

If a student is identified as a close contact of a positive COVID-19 PCR or LFD test, household member or close contacts outside of school (ie test and trace) they will still need to self-isolate and MUST NOT come into school for a lateral flow test.

How often are we offering testing?

Secondary school students in school will receive three LFDs tests three to five days apart.

When will my child be tested and how will I be notified of the result?

We will notify you through the Parents App regarding your child's test appointment time and test result. If the test result is positive we will contact you by telephone straight away.

What if my child (parent/guardian) develops symptoms?

This testing programme at school is for people with no symptoms. If your child (parent/guardian) develops symptoms at any time (such as a high temperature; a new, continuous cough; or a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste) they must immediately self-isolate, and book a PCR test by visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test> or by calling 119.

What are the expectations around attendance?

Unless your child is identified as CEV and has received a letter advising them to shield, or is isolating because of Covid-19, your child is expected to attend school as normal.

Are there any changes to how the school operated before the lockdown in January?

Other than the wearing of masks in classrooms – no. We will still have staggered starts, breaks, lunches and finish times for each year group.

Year groups will continue to be in zones and year group bubbles.

Lunch arrangements will remain the same.

Please contact us if you need this information in any other language or format or if you have any questions. You can call the office on 01142 694801 or email enquiries@hgsc.co.uk