

PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE: RETURN TO SCHOOL

23rd February 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I am writing a single Principal's Update to all so that everyone has the same information concerning our plans to manage the return to school from March 8th. This update does not contain the full details, many which will follow in the coming days, but it will give sufficient information for families and colleagues to understand the way in which the School will reopen and make any necessary and appropriate plans.

Date(s) of Return

Whilst yesterday's headlines suggested that all schools would reopen to all students on March 8th (and in technical terms, this is true) further guidance issued by the Department for Education late last night acknowledged that secondary schools would need to operate a phased return throughout the week of 8th March to enable the required testing to take place.

In line with this directive, the School will reopen to the

following year groups on the following dates. A detailed schedule with specific, individual times of arrival and testing appointments will be produced a little later this week. It is important that these times are observed because we are required to manage the flow through the testing centre and cannot allow large queues to develop.

Parents of Years 7 and above are asked to remain on site until a negative result is

confirmed after which students will be allowed to enter school; until then, students will be asked to await their result with their parents where possible. Students should not mix with others until a negative result has been established. Government guidance requires us to prioritize Years 10 – 13. Year 6 do not participate in testing.

The dates of return are as follows (Specific arrival times will be allocated)

Monday 8th March	8.40am	All year 6 to return (Year 6 are not involved in testing) (Year 6 Boarders welcome in Avison from 8am)
	9.00am – 1.00pm	Year 12
	2.00pm – 6.00pm	Year 13
Tuesday 9th March	9.00am – 1.00pm	Year 10
	2.00pm – 6.00pm	Year 11
Wednesday 10th March	9.00am – 1.00pm	Years 7/8/9

Full and detailed instructions of where to go on arrival will be issued later this week, as will consent forms which will need to be completed prior to arrival.

A number of staff will be involved in the supervision of on-site testing. These will largely be drawn from boarding staff because of the continuing need to oversee self-testing

throughout the remainder of the year. Staff will be contacted in the coming days and asked to complete the relevant training.

Subsequent Student Testing

Government guidance requires the School to offer two follow-up tests to all students no more than 5 days apart. These will be administered within school between Thursday 11th March and Wednesday 17th March. Students will leave lessons at

designated times to attend the test centre which will be sited in the Gym (all other activity having been reassigned for the necessary time period).

Once the three on-site tests have been administered,

students will then be offered twice weekly self-tests which they will administer and register with their families from home (day students) or within boarding houses (boarders).

Testing for School Staff

Twice weekly testing will be available to all staff who wish to participate via home testing packs. These will be available

to collect from Reception towards the end of next week to enable staff to self-test (and log their results) from

home prior to returning to work. Further details will be circulated to staff nearer the time.

Teaching During the Initial Testing Period

Teaching staff will attend school from Monday 8th March. Once a year group's first designated testing session has been completed, face-to-face teaching may begin with them in school. Until then, teaching will continue to be delivered online. If a year group is timetabled for a lesson

during their first designated testing period, this lesson will not take place. From Thursday 11th March, all teaching will take place face-to-face for all students.

Instrumental teaching will remain online for the whole w/c 8th March. Instrumental

teaching in person will begin w/c 15th March.

There will be some disruption to classes between 11th March and 17th March as students attend testing appointments.

International Students

All international families are advised to check the travel restrictions and quarantine arrangements pertinent to their own situation before arranging travel. Because of the small size of the school's boarding community and its reliance on shared spaces and facilities, it is not possible for international students to quarantine in school.

All quarantine must take place either in Government sponsored hotels (for those in "red zone" countries who have permission to reside in the UK) or with guardians.

Whilst we hope all students will want to attend school for the remainder of the term, we recognize this may not be possible for some international

students owing to travel restrictions and/or quarantine arrangements both here in the UK and in their home country. Therefore, for those unable to attend school physically for good reason, the School will continue to provide remote learning.

Infection Control Measures

All the mitigations and infection controls outlined in the previously circulated document “Keeping each other safe and well during Coronavirus” still apply. The School’s Covid-19 Risk Assessment will be updated in coming days to reflect new directives. Students and staff will be advised of any changes prior to their return. However, all staff and students should be aware that face-coverings will now be required in all public areas including classrooms and common rooms, at all times.

Any member of staff who believes a new Personal Risk Assessment is required should contact Tom Burns.

Any student displaying symptoms, or who has been a contact of, or a household member of someone who has tested positive for Covid-19 should not attend school but self-isolate and apply for a PCR test online in the usual way.

Any student who tests positive for Covid-19 in any of the school on-site testing will

be isolated until they can be collected from the school site. They may not travel by public transport. They must then book a confirmatory PCR test from home. The School does not have the facilities to isolate positive cases for any period of time.

Any student or member of staff who tests positive using one of the home tests must not attend school but must self-isolate and book a confirmatory PCR test.

I hope you find this initial overview helpful. More details will follow in the coming days, most specifically detailed timings for students arriving at school; training information for staff involved in testing and further information for staff concerning teaching arrangements for the first week back.

We are all delighted that we will soon be back together again and look forward to seeing all our students and colleagues – albeit from a distance!

Further updates will be available in the coming days.

With all good wishes,



Paul Bambrough
Principal

