



Friday, 26 February 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope that you and your families are well. As Sydenham School works towards the wider re-opening of the school from Monday 8th March onwards, this letter outlines the arrangements for this. We are very much looking forward to welcoming our entire student body back after weeks of being away from the school site. I am sure that you too welcome the fact that your children will be able to return to school and re-establish their routines and good habits. You will see from the letter that a lot of hard work has gone into the preparations to open the school site safely for all students and staff. I would like to thank our staff team for their work and commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of everyone in the school community. Thanks also go to those parent/carer volunteers who have so willingly given up their time to support with the running of the Mass Testing Facility. This is also very much appreciated.

Staggered return to the school site from March 8th, 2021

We are delighted to share with you the schedule for the return of all students to the school site during the week beginning March 8th. We have worked hard to ensure that this is as rapid as possible, given the logistical complexities of the mass testing on return. Part of this involves us starting testing on Friday 6th March, to enable us to get everyone back within the first week.

Students will be tested using lateral flow tests three times in the first two weeks. Please look at this schedule carefully to check the date of the first test for your child and the first date of on-site lessons for them. As you can see, we have prioritised the examination year groups of years 10-13. This is in line with government guidance.

Year group	Date of first lateral flow test (staggered by tutor group, students will return home for the rest of the day)	Date of first day back on site for lessons
7	Wednesday 10 th March (morning)	Thursday 11 th March
8	Wednesday 10 th March (afternoon)	Thursday 11 th March
9	Thursday 11 th March (morning)	Friday 12 th March
10	Monday 8 th March (afternoon)	Tuesday 9 th March
11	Monday 8 th March (morning)	Tuesday 9 th March
12	Friday 5 th March (morning)	Monday 8 th March
13	Friday 5 th March (afternoon)	Monday 8 th March



Next week we will write to you and your child with precise timings for the first lateral flow test for their tutor group and details of the second and third tests. *To enable us to manage the logistics of this safely, once your child has had their first lateral flow test, they will return straight home for the rest of that day.* The second and third tests will be managed during their normal school day, after which students will return straight back to lessons.

During this staggered return, we will teach live lessons for the full days that your child is still at home, with remote learning (to be completed independently) set for the day they come in just for their test. Please be aware that several of our staff will be heavily committed to running the testing and so may not be as available during that week as normal.

Please note that the last day of our provision for the children of key workers and vulnerable students will be Friday 5th March.

Consent for Testing

We are extremely grateful for the efforts of families to ensure that the consent form for lateral flow testing is completed for every child. We are now approaching a 100% completion rate and have been bowled over by the exceptionally high level of uptake for the test. This form is essential for the registration for the tests by our office team, which is a very time-consuming process on such a large scale. If you have not already completed the form, please complete it at this [link](#) as a matter of urgency. Additional details of the testing can be found in this [letter](#) on our website. The form should be completed even if you are withholding consent.

Please note that if your child is 16 or above, they should complete the consent form themselves. We would be grateful if you could check to ensure that this has been done.

If you have any questions about the testing, please contact Ms Gostling at d.gostling@sydenham.lewisham.sch.uk

Home Testing Kits

Once your child has completed the three lateral flow tests at school, they will be provided with home testing kits to use twice a week at home. We will provide you with more information about these in the coming weeks.



Additional Risk Assessment Measures – Face Coverings in Classrooms

Upon return, we will maintain all of our established risk assessment measures, to help us continue to manage the risk of Covid-19 within the school community. We will remind students of these protocols in an assembly next Wednesday.

Please note that the new government guidance requires students in English schools to wear face coverings in classrooms as well as in communal spaces. This will be in place at least until the Easter holidays.

We recognise that this is not an ideal situation and we would be extremely grateful if you could explain the importance of adhering to this requirement to your child. Students may need additional face coverings to change during the school day to make this more comfortable.

Please note that we will begin charging for face coverings that we provide to students who have not got a mask with them at school. Please ensure that your child brings their face covering to school each day.

Periods 1-2 - Wednesday 3rd March

To provide us with some time to ensure our staff are fully prepared to implement the Risk Assessment and support lateral flow testing, we are going to suspend live lessons for periods 1 and 2 on Wednesday 3rd March. During these two lessons, students will be set remote work via Show My Homework.

World Book Day

A reminder that this is on March 1st and whilst we may not be able to celebrate it collectively by dressing up as our favourite book characters in person, we do hope that you are able to mark this with celebration of literature with your children. Our YLCs will be highlighting the various online activities that have been devised and signposted by our Library team, Christine Joseph and Hannah Briscoe and we are delighted that students will still be able to have some fun with reading. Every day is a reading day and the wider and more avidly we can get all of our students reading, the better!



Please do not hesitate to contact your child's tutor if you have any further questions or if we can be of support in any way. We are really looking forward to welcoming every one of our students and colleagues back onto the school site and for our school community to be in full flow once again.

Yours sincerely

Gloria Lowe
Headteacher