



Beaumont School

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Dear Parents/Carers

I hope that you and your families are well and that our students had a restful half term break. I am sure that you are aware of the government's decision to reopen schools to all students from 8 March. I am so looking forward to having everybody back in school and the students having face-to-face lessons once again.

I have decided to write to you today to alert you to our current thinking in response to the Prime Minister's announcements and subsequent documentation that I received yesterday evening. I would like to be clear that these arrangements are subject to change as more information becomes available, for instance, I know there is an important webinar tomorrow afternoon that I need to attend and this may result in alterations to this plan. However, on balance I believe it is better for you to know what is in the pipeline. I also want to publicly thank my staff and the volunteers that have set up the testing centre (in the old gym). I am extremely proud of what they have already put in place and it gives us a head start on the enormous logistical exercise that lies ahead.

Yesterday evening I received a communication from the Secretary of State for Education, which made it clear that in terms of our plans for reopening we should stagger this process to ensure as far as possible that all students can be tested prior to their return. In terms of the order we have chosen for the students' return, we have been guided by the operational guidance for schools from the Department for Education (Feb 2021), which states 'You have the flexibility to consider how best to deliver testing on a phased basis from 8 March, depending on your circumstances and local arrangements, but you should prioritise vulnerable children and children of critical workers, and year groups 10 to 13.' We are therefore planning a sequence which is likely to follow the structure set out below, but as I have said this is subject to some alteration.

Monday 8 March: Years 10, 11 & 13 are tested. Form groups will be given a set time to arrive at school, will complete the process for testing and then return home. Lessons will be set online for this day and the three year groups will commence face-to-face lessons in school on Tuesday 9 March. Any positive tests will be immediately communicated to parents by phone within 45 minutes of the test being taken.

Tuesday 9 March: Years 12 & 7 are tested. Form groups will be given a set time to arrive at school, will complete the process for testing and then return home. Lessons will be set online for Monday and Tuesday and the two year groups will commence face-to-face lessons in school on Wednesday 10 March. Any positive tests will be immediately communicated to parents by phone within 45 minutes of the test being taken.

Wednesday 10 March: Years 8 & 9 are tested. Form groups will be given a set time to arrive at school, will complete the process for testing and then return home. Lessons will be set online for Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday and the two year groups will commence face-to-face lessons in school on Thursday 11 March. Any positive tests will be immediately communicated to parents by phone within 45 minutes of the test being taken.



Further information regarding the details of the testing day will be sent home to parents/carers nearer the time and we will use assembly time on Thursday 4 March to issue students with further information.

From this point we will need to give two more tests to each student in school. This will be challenging in terms of maintaining normal teaching with students being called out of lessons throughout the day, but the benefits of the students being back in school significantly outweigh these inconveniences. Beyond the three tests given in school, we will then be issuing home test kits for the next Lateral Flow Test to be carried out by parents and carers at home. More detail will be provided about this when we have it. My information from the Department for Education is that all students should then complete home testing twice a week, but we await further guidance on this.

We will be chasing the few outstanding consent forms for Lateral Flow Testing later this week.

Another change for the reopening is that face masks will be expected to be worn in classrooms as well as in indoor communal spaces. This rule will then be reviewed after the Easter break. This is obviously not ideal, but I support it as a measure to protect health and make it possible for schools to reopen. Thank you in advance for your understanding on this point and I would be grateful if you could let any children you have at the school aware of it in advance of their return.

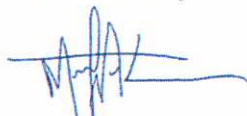
I would like to ask for your forbearance in terms of responses to queries over the period of 8 - 19 March. Many of the schools Essential Services Team and Leadership Team will be tied up with the running of the mass testing during this period and obviously will not be able to complete their normal roles. Hence there may be a short period of disruption to normal services, which we will endeavour to minimise, but clearly would appreciate your patience.

I know Years 11 and 13 are anxiously awaiting further news with regards to their examinations. We are expecting an announcement on Thursday 25 February but until then please remind your child that "all is still to play for" so they should give everything set their very best effort.

I hope that all the work going on to reduce transmission and fight the virus continues to be effective. Our systems put in place in September, including bubbles and year group zones around the school site, will continue. Our responsibility in terms of tracking and tracing for all school-related positive cases of COVID-19 remains in place and it is crucial that everyone in our community adheres to all the school and national rules. The better we do this, the sooner we will return to normality.

Thank you once again for your support at such a challenging time for everyone. Please pass my very best wishes to any of our students in your household and let them know how much the school staff are looking forward to seeing them in person again. We hope very much that, with the rapid progress in vaccinating the population, we can start to see light at the end of a very long tunnel.

Yours sincerely



M Atkinson
Headteacher