

5 March 2021



Dear Parent/Guardian

We are very much looking forward to welcoming all students back to school as we complete the testing process. Thank you very much to everyone who has given their consent for their child to be tested. I am pleased to inform you that it is only a tiny minority of people who have not done so; therefore, the coverage is good and will hopefully bring some degree of reassurance to everyone concerned. Consent can be given here:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScn4w8AnvfkLrx7Ks0Fpplp8DWM-lz5uKI4MPbtLp3Ss6C5Yg/viewform>

A few parents have asked if the students need to wear uniform when they come in for their test. I can confirm that they are not required to do so.

The rules in school will be very similar to how they were before this closure. I will run through some of these now and would very much appreciate it if you could discuss these with your child before their return and stress how important it is that they follow them. The students will largely be taught in their year group areas, except where they need to go to a specialist room (i.e. a computer or technology room). For the most part, their movement around the school is reduced when compared to normal and the teachers will travel to them. This does require, however, students being required to wait in the corridors between lessons. It is essential that during this time the students keep their distance from each other as much as possible, do not touch each other, and keep their masks on.

The Government has said that students should now wear masks in classrooms where social distancing cannot be observed. I'm afraid that this applies to the vast majority of lessons. For this reason students and staff will be required to wear masks in classrooms as well as corridors. This is not ideal for good teaching and learning, but I hope you will agree that, in these difficult times, we must do what is necessary to enable the students to return to school safely. Of course, students who are exempt from wearing a mask will not be required to do so and should carry their exemption card at all times. Nationally, this policy is due to be reviewed at Easter.

In every classroom we have marked out a 2 metre teacher zone. Teachers will try, as much as possible, to stay within this zone and, similarly, students should try to stay out of it, although, of course, in the normal activity in the classroom, there will be times when this cannot be the case.

We will continue to ask students to hand sanitise as they enter every classroom and to clean their desks when they leave. We will not lend equipment to students, so it is essential that when they return to school they are fully equipped. They will need:

- Blue or black ink pens (I suggest more than one in case one runs out/disappears)
- Pencils (again, I suggest more than one)
- A ruler
- A pencil sharpener
- An eraser
- A protractor
- A pair of compasses
- A scientific calculator
- A glue stick
- Tissues

Also, not essential, but helpful:

- Coloured pencils
- A highlighter

In the same way that we will not lend equipment to the students, they should not lend theirs to each other.

Before school, at lunch and at break times the students are required to stay in the area that is set aside for the use of their year group.

We understand that, before the current closure, it was frustrating when we had to send, in accordance with Public Health England and Department for Education advice, whole year groups home when there was a positive case in school. We are going to do everything we can to avoid doing this, but we need your help. The students must try to keep their distance from each other. I know this is difficult in schools, but it is when the students are together at break times or while waiting in corridors that this is particularly important – please help them to understand this. But the most important way that you can help is by trying to make sure that nobody with Covid-19 comes into school in the first place. You can do this in two ways:

1. When we send home the testing kits, please do them carefully and regularly twice a week.
2. Please do not send your child to school if you have any doubts about their health at all until you are sure that they do not have Covid-19.

To be clear, I cannot guarantee that there will not be any year group or partial school closures in the future and will continue to do what I am advised by the authorities, but we will try our very best.

I will go through the rules with all the students on their return via a pre-recorded assembly.

Finally, I have two additional things to share with you from external sources. One is from Kent Police who have asked all local Headteachers to pass on the letter below to you. Secondly, a company who provides educational consultancy and training for schools recently sent me a document called 'Eight Reasons to be Reassured', which I thought I would share with you – this is published next to this letter. I do understand that people may be feeling anxious about students returning to school, but I believe there are reasons to be optimistic and would like you to know that we are doing everything we can to make things our end as safe as possible.

I hope you all have a good weekend and we look forward to seeing the students very soon.

Yours faithfully



Tracey Savage
Headteacher

A message from Kent Police:

Dear Parents/Carers

We are looking forward to seeing our young people returning to their schools as we appreciate this has been a very difficult time for them and wish them all well. We do ask, however, that children are reminded of the current Covid guidelines when they are travelling to and from their homes.

Please encourage them to make their way straight to school and to NOT meet beforehand with friends in public.

At the end of the school day, the warmer weather will also undoubtedly entice children into parks and other public areas; however it is again important to remember that the current rules only allow

meeting one person from another household at a safe distance outdoors, and only as part of daily exercise.

During the next few weeks, our officers will be out in several locations for reassurance purposes and to ensure the safety of children and other people.

Kind regards

