

26th February 2021

Dear parents and carers,

Secondary – March Return

I hope you and your family are well. I am writing to you today with the great news that all schools have been asked by the Government to prepare to open, with students returning to secondary school on different days during the week of Monday 8th March.

Our priority is the safety of our students, your family, and our staff. In this letter I will explain about two additions to our safety arrangements – changes to the use of face coverings, and a new requirement for testing.

I have also attached two other notes:

1. Detail on all the preventative arrangements
2. Information and consent forms for asymptomatic testing

Face Coverings

Previously students were required to wear a mask when moving around indoor communal areas of the school, and in their classroom whenever social distancing was not possible.

The Government now recommends that face coverings should also be worn in classrooms or during activities unless social distancing can be maintained, and this recommendation remains in place until Easter, at which point the Government will review it. So students are expected and encouraged to wear a face mask throughout the school day. Students will be provided with a face mask for use in school. You can read further information on face masks in the accompanying note (Point 10.)

Asymptomatic testing

Secondary schools have been asked to establish an Asymptomatic Testing Site where students and staff can take a Lateral Flow test. These tests give a result in 30 minutes and help identify people who are infectious but do not have symptoms.

Each student will be asked to take three tests in school, taken a few days apart across their first couple of weeks back at school. They will be able to return to their face-to-face lessons following their first negative test result. After they have completed the three tests at school, students will be supplied with Lateral Flow Test kits to take a test at home, twice a week.

Testing is voluntary but strongly encouraged as it provides additional confidence to the whole school community. For us to be able to test your child, we require your consent. Please see the accompanying consent letter.

A staggered return to school

Due to complexities of testing so many students on their first day back, we will be having staggered start dates for each year group. These are as follows:

| Date the students will start back | Year group |
|-----------------------------------|------------|
| Monday 8 th March | Year 11 |
| Tuesday 9 th March | Year 10 |
| Wednesday 10 th March | Year 7 |
| Thursday 11 th March | Year 8 |
| Friday 12 th March | Year 9 |

Please note that the children of critical workers and those identified as ‘vulnerable’ are to continue to come to school each day. When the rest of their year group returns, they will join their year group bubble.

What do I need to do now?

Up to and including the week of Monday 8th March we continue to welcome children of critical workers and those identified as ‘vulnerable’ at school, all other students will continue with their remote learning until their day when they return to school as indicated above.

I know that there is a lot of information here, but we wanted you to be fully informed. We will of course be supporting the students as they return, ensuring that they are confident with all the arrangements we have in place.

Please note, we are asking for your consent for your child to undergo three flow tests at school. Please see the further information on this in the attached. If you have already given your consent for your child to be tested, please skip this step.

Please refer to our Privacy Notice, which explains how personal data will be used: https://www.oasiscommunitylearning.org/uploaded/Oasis_Documents/OCL_Privacy_Notice.pdf

Please read all the information provided carefully. If after reading everything you have any questions, please contact us by email at office@oasisimmingham.org

Thank you for your ongoing support to the Academy. To reopen safely, we will need everyone to continue to follow all the safety measures carefully.

Yours sincerely,

Principal, Oasis Academy

Sara Mcloughlin

More information on our arrangements

Our preparations closely follow the guidance from the Government. You can read the advice by searching for '[DfE What parents need to know during COVID-19.](#)'

1. Attendance

The Government's guidance is clear that students are expected to attend school during the week commencing Monday 8th March (please see more information on staggered starts in point 4 below). This means that parents have a duty to ensure that their child regularly attends school, and that schools have a responsibility to record attendance and follow up absence.

2. Social Distancing

We will have a number of one-way systems in place to remind students about the importance of distancing wherever possible. Classrooms will be set up in a way to maximise individual students' space. Desks will be side by side and forward facing. There will be as much ventilation as possible.

3. Year group bubbles

As part of our social distancing precautions, your child's year group will become a 'bubble.' Their bubble will be taught in a specific part of the school and will go to lunch and breaks together. This will help us to minimise contacts and mixing, while delivering a broad and balanced curriculum.

4. A staggered return

To help with the requirement to test students at school on their return, we are staggering the start dates for each year group. Please see below.

| First Day arrangements | | | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Year group | First day back | Arrival time between | End time | Enter via |
| Year 11 | Monday 8 th March | 8.15 | 2.45 | <i>School Walk</i> |
| Year 10 | Tuesday 9 th March | 8.15 | 2.45 | <i>Front Entrance</i> |
| Year 7 | Wednesday 10 th March | 8.20 | 2.40 | <i>School walk</i> |
| Year 8 | Thursday 11 th March | 8.25 | 2.50 | <i>Front Entrance</i> |
| Year 9 | Friday 12 th March | 8.20 | 2.40 | <i>Front Entrance</i> |

Please be reminded that if your child is, for example in Year 7, they will be taught online as usual until they return to school on *Wednesday 10th*.

5. Hygiene and cleaning

Good hygiene is everyone's responsibility, and we are all responsible for each other's health. We will maintain intensified cleaning routines with a focus on regularly wiping down door handles and hard surfaces. The Academy will be cleaned every day and there will be disinfectant sprays for cleaning purposes in each class.

6. Cleaning hands

Everyone will clean their hands thoroughly and more often than usual. This can be done with soap and water or hand sanitiser. Students will clean their hands when they arrive at the school, when they return from breaks, when they change rooms, and before and after eating.

7. Risk assessments

The thorough risk assessment we follow has been developed from the Government and detailed guidelines from the Oasis Community Learning. Our completed risk assessment will be signed off by the Oasis national leadership team along with myself as Principal, and will remain under constant review.

8. Getting to and from school

The Government explain that students and staff may use public transport where necessary but encourage everyone to walk or cycle to and from school wherever it is possible and safe to do so. We know that this will not always be possible, so please let us know any concerns around this.

People aged 11 and over must wear a face covering when travelling on public transport. People who are exempt do not need to wear a face covering.

9. Face Coverings

When students arrive at school, they must safely remove their mask if they have used one whilst travelling to the academy, by using the straps rather than the front of the face covering.

They will then be required to wash their hands and put on a face covering provided by the Academy.

The Academy face covering will be made of cloth and therefore is re-useable and washable. We ask that they are washed at home on a regular basis. They will be colour coded by year group and will be treated as an item of uniform.

Students are now required and encouraged to wear their face covering whilst in class. This requirement will be reviewed by the Government at Easter. This does not apply in situations where wearing a face covering would impact on the ability to take part in exercise or strenuous activity, for example in PE lessons.

When going to the dining hall, they should wear their covering on their face until they are seated for the purposes of eating. At this point they should remove their face

covering and put it in their blazer pocket. After eating, the covering should be placed back on the face and hands must be sanitised.

Staff will be required to wear visors when teaching. They will be required also to wear a face mask when social distancing is not possible i.e. when they are supporting an individual student.

10. Devices, water bottles and other equipment

If your child has a school-issued laptop or iPad, they are required to bring it in, fully charged, for their individual use.

Students are required to bring in their own water bottle for their individual use. These must be labelled and can be re-filled during the day.

Pupils should not bring in any unnecessary equipment into school. Pupils will need to bring in a black pen, purple pen, pencil, ruler and planner. Pupils should also have a bag to carry all their equipment in.

All students will return in full school uniform. They do not need to be cleaned more often than usual. At this time, whilst testing is taking place in the Sports Hall, there will be no PE lessons but pupils will be allowed to go for a walk around the school grounds.

11. Suspected symptoms, a confirmed case, and multiple confirmed cases

If your young person 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 test by calling 119 or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

12. Reduced access to outdoor visitors

To help us reduce the risk of infection, we are asking parents to communicate with us via the telephone 01469-576599

If it is required for you to come into the Academy, you will be required to wear a disposable face covering provided by us unless you are exempt.

1. Consent for asymptomatic testing

COVID-19 testing for staff and students

The government has asked secondary schools to offer Covid-19 tests known as 'lateral flow tests,' that provide a result within 30 mins. Up to a third of people who have coronavirus have no symptoms, so testing will improve our ability to stop the virus from spreading within school. We welcome these tests as an additional protective measure that will help keep everyone safe. The tests are quick and safe and will help us to identify if anyone has the coronavirus as early as possible.

- Students with a positive test result will need to self-isolate in line with the stay-at-home guidance. They will also need to arrange another test through <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test> to confirm the result.
- Students with a negative result can continue to attend school and use protective measures.

To undergo the asymptomatic testing, we must have your permission for your child to be tested three times on their return to school. After they have returned and been tested at school, students will be supplied with tests to self-swab and test themselves twice a week at home.

Tests at school

Your young person will be asked to take a test immediately on their return to school (during the week beginning Monday 8th March), and then twice more within their first few weeks back.

Tests at home

After your child has returned for the first week and been tested at school, students will be supplied with test kits to self-swab and test themselves twice a week at home. Students must report their result at home to NHS Test and Trace as soon as the test is completed either online or by telephone as per the instructions in the home test kit.

As an Academy, we would also encourage staff and students to share any positive results with us as soon as possible to help with contact tracing.

- Students aged 11 attending a secondary school can take the test themselves or with the support of an adult.
- Students aged 12 to 17 should self-test and report with adult supervision. The adult may conduct the test if necessary.

What do I need to do now?

Please read the additional information on 'How will our process work?' below.

Please also visit <https://www.oasiscommunitylearning.org/covid> to read the information on consent and our privacy notice.

If, once you have read all the information, you would like to give your permission for your young person to be tested and your consent for us to handle the information around the results, **we will need to receive this confirmation ahead of their return.**

The quickest and easiest way to do this is by opening your MyChildAtSchool app, go to the parental consent section and click the slider to green to grant consent. You can find copies of all of the important information including the full consent form in the Important Documents Section. Information on accessing MyChildAtSchool can be found on the Academy website here:

<https://www.oasisacademyimingham.org/academy-life/mychildatschool-mcas>

We are urging all families to agree to this safe and quick test three times within the first couple of weeks once your child has returned to school. If you do not give your permission or they do not consent, your child should attend school as normal and continue to follow all other safety precautions.

How will our process work?

- All secondary students with parental consent will be tested as they return from 8th March.

- Those taking the test at school will be supervised by trained staff. The 'lateral flow' tests are quick and easy using a swab of your nose and throat.
- Results (which take around half an hour from testing) will be shared directly with students participating. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed of a positive result.
- Should a student or staff member receive a positive test, they will need to self-isolate for 10 days and take a further 'PCR test' (similar to those done in local testing sites) on the same day and minimise any further contact. You should call 119 to book a follow-up test. Once they have had the further test, they will need to self-isolate while they await the result. If the PCR test returns a positive result they will have to self-isolate for the full 10 days and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace.
- Should a student or staff member receive a negative test, they will be able to stay in school and resume their activities as normal. A student will only be told if they test positive on a 'lateral flow' test, so if you do not hear you can assume it was negative. A small number may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason.
- Studies conducted by Oxford University and Public Health England, show that the tests are accurate in identifying a case. The tests have lower sensitivity but they are better at picking up cases when a person has higher viral load, hence the need to test frequently.

What if my child develops symptoms?

This testing programme at school is for people with no symptoms. If your young person 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 test by calling 119 or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

HOW TO DO YOUR TEST

WHILE THIS IS A SELF-SWAB TEST, THERE WILL BE A TESTING HELPER WHO WILL OVERSEE THINGS AND PROVIDE HELP IF YOU NEED

1 YOUR COVID-19 TEST WILL BE SCHEDULED. IF YOU ARE UNDER 16, YOUR PARENT / CARER WILL HAVE CONSENTED

2 YOUR TEST WILL BE FAST AND WHILE IT MIGHT FEEL A LITTLE UNCOMFORTABLE, IT WON'T HURT YOU

3 BLOW YOUR NOSE IF NEEDED. WASH AND DRY/SANITISE YOUR HANDS. REMOVE THE SWAB BEING CAREFUL NOT TO TOUCH THE SOFT PART

4 OPEN YOUR MOUTH WIDE AND USE A MIRROR TO LOOK AT THE BACK OF YOUR THROAT, THEN USE THE SWAB TO RUB FIRMLY 4 TIMES ON EACH SIDE

10 SECS

5 REMOVE THE SWAB CAREFULLY WITHOUT TOUCHING YOUR TEETH, TONGUE OR GUMS

6 GENTLY PLACE IT ABOUT 2-2.5 CM INSIDE ONE OF YOUR NOSTRILS. ROLL THE SWAB 4-5 TIMES ALONG THE LINING OF THE NOSTRIL, THIS WILL TAKE 10-15 SECONDS

7 AFTER THIS, YOU'RE DONE, GENTLY REMOVE THE SWAB BEING CAREFUL NOT TO LET ANYTHING TOUCH THE TIP

8 YOUR SWAB CAN THEN BE PLACED IN A TUBE FOR TESTING, THIS TAKES ABOUT 30 MINUTES

9 YOUR SCHOOL / COLLEGE WILL CONTACT YOU OR YOUR PARENT / CARER WITH THE RESULTS AND LET YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENS NEXT