

4th March 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

Following my previous communications, I am writing with details of our plans for the full return of all our pupils and students during the week commencing 8th March 2021. I am delighted that we will be able to re-open and welcome back our pupils on a full-time basis. While many of the measures that will be in place will be very familiar to you and your children, there will be a number of new processes to be aware of, the most important of which are the programme of testing that we are required to carry out, and the wearing of face coverings in classrooms as well as in communal areas.

As always, in every aspect of our planning, the safety and wellbeing of our pupils and staff has been at the heart of all our decisions. This will remain the case, and we will keep everything under review, making any necessary changes to maintain this. You can find an up-to-date copy of our Risk Assessment on our website.

The measures that we implemented at the beginning of September 2020 proved to be effective, and we are very proud of how well our pupils and students adapted to them. However, I thought it might be useful to list below some of the more critical measures as a reminder:

1. Pupils and students displaying symptoms of COVID-19 must not come into school, and are expected to take a test as soon as possible. If a pupil displays symptoms of COVID-19 when in school, they must report to Pupil Services immediately, via the external entrance.
2. If a pupil/member of staff tests positive for COVID-19, having been in school in the last 2 days, we will identify close-contacts (as we did last term) and they will be asked to self-isolate for a period for 10 days (this is regardless of whether they receive a negative test result).
3. We will continue to operate the different start and finish times for year groups, as were in place before Christmas:

	School begins	School Ends
Year 7	8.35 am	3.00 pm
Year 8	8.35 am	3.00 pm
Year 9	8.50 am	3.05 pm
Year 10	8.50 am	3.05 pm
Year 11	8.50 am	3.05 pm
Year 12 & 13	8.50 am	3.05 pm

4. Each year group will remain in its own “bubble” and pupil and students will continue to use their dedicated internal and external zones, with which they are all very familiar.
5. Pupils must continue to use the entrance/exit closest to where they want to go, and the one-way system will continue to operate. Pupils will continue to be expected to move from lesson to lesson using the outside of the building.

6. We will continue with our increased daily cleaning regime. Pupils will continue to be asked to sanitise their hands and clean their desks and chairs with anti-bacterial wipes at the beginning of each lesson.
7. Windows will be left open for the duration of the day to ensure rooms are well-ventilated. All pupils will be expected to return in full school uniform, including jumpers and ties. Given the weather has improved, there should be no need for pupils to wear their coats in the classroom. We will, however, keep this under review, should the weather take a turn for the worse.
8. Parents/carers may only come into the school building with a prior appointment.

Testing Programme

As you are aware, our programme for the initial testing of all our pupils and students will begin on Friday 5th March, and those who receive a negative test result may return to face-to-face lessons on the next school day. We will then roll out the next phase of the testing programme, and make arrangements for students and pupils to have a second and third test before the end of Friday 19th March. This will involve testing pupils, within their group bubbles, throughout the course of the school day. We will, of course, try to keep any disruption to a minimum, but this will mean, that pupils will be asked to leave their lessons in order to take their tests. We have uploaded onto our website, a very brief video demonstrating how the test should be administered, please click [here](#) to view the video. If your child has never taken a test before, I would ask that you spend some time with them, watching the video, and talking it through with them. There will, of course, be trained members of staff on hand in school to support the pupils and students and to answer any questions they may have about how to carry out the test.

From the week commencing 22nd March 2021, pupils and students will be expected to carry out twice weekly tests at home. We are currently awaiting receipt of the test kits, and will distribute these in due course. The results of the tests will need to be registered with the DfE/NHS, and there is clear guidance and detailed instructions included with the kits. If a pupil or student does return a positive test, they must:

- notify us immediately via admin@sweynepark.com;
- arrange to take a PCR test via the Government website as soon as possible;
- self-isolate pending the result of the PCR test.

In the event that your son/daughter is not able to administer the test at home, please contact us at admin@sweynepark.com, with details of the difficulties they are experiencing. We will, of course, do our best to support them.

While these LFT tests are voluntary, we strongly encourage full engagement in the testing process to ensure, as much as possible, the safety and well-being of our whole school community.

Face Coverings

In line with the recent Government guidance, it has now been recommended that pupils, students and staff wear face coverings in classrooms and communal spaces, where it is not possible to socially distance (unless they have a medical exemption). This does not apply when pupils are doing physical activity in PE. Please click [here](#) to read the full Government guidelines on this. We would ask that

pupils and students wear plain face coverings, without logo or designs, and are respectful of the National guidelines.

Shielding

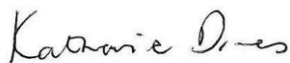
As you may be aware, the Government has recently revised their criteria in terms of who should be shielding, at least until 31st March 2021. As the list of people advised to shield has increased, this has meant that a number of our teaching staff will not be able to come into school, and will continue to teach remotely. It may interest to know that, unlike the previous advice, people can no longer decide to waive the advice to shield and elect to come into school. This does, unfortunately, mean that there will be an impact on the number of cover staff that we have to use, and I would ask you to please be mindful of this and bear with us while we deal with this unavoidable situation.

On a similar note, if your son or daughter has received a shielding letter, please send a copy of the letter to admin@sweynepark.com. All necessary arrangements will be made to ensure that these pupils or students continue to receive the best possible quality of education during this period of time.

We are fully aware that for some pupils and students returning to school may be a difficult and possibly stressful time. Please rest assured that we already have plans in place to support them, and will provide any additional help pupils and students may need, depending on their individual circumstances and experiences of this latest period of lockdown.

Thank you for all your support over the last few months while we all adapted to a completely new way of working remotely. We are incredibly proud of how well our pupils and students have dealt with such changes, they have shown great maturity and resilience. We are very much looking forward to seeing all of our pupils and students back in school and reconnecting them with all aspects of school life.

Kind regards



Katharine Dines
Headteacher

