



Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021

Dear Parents,

## Parent Update Letter

Following our recent letter, we have been working on the detail in preparation for students returning to school. We are pleased to now be sending you the following provisional information. This will be followed up with a more detailed **return to school** plan being sent out to you on Thursday. This will include specific year group information for testing appointments, student protocols and subsequent timings across the week.

Subject to staffing and enough local volunteers, we have decided to organise testing for the whole school on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March and a full return to all year groups from Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup>.

Monday 8<sup>th</sup> will see all students issued with an appointment time for their testing. They will then stay in school for the duration of the 30 minutes it takes to have their result confirmed. We are taking this 'test and go' approach to avoid contact between students prior to getting their test. The last thing we would want is students sat in the hall or in lesson, to then find out they have a positive test as this would result in all their close contacts in class (where 2 metre distancing cannot be maintained) having to go home and self-isolate for ten days.

The school will be supporting students to self-administer **three** lateral flow tests over the two weeks commencing 8<sup>th</sup> March. This is in order for them to be trained on how to carry out these tests so that they can successfully self-administer at home after this period. Although testing is consent based, it is strongly recommended that your child is tested and we will be urging all families to complete the online testing consent form over the coming days. For every student not tested, this increases the risk of the virus being undetected and will result in more students being sent home to self-isolate. Something we would all want to avoid.

We have taken the decision to get all students back into school as quickly as possible, and it is for this reason, that all students will receive their first lateral flow test on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March. Once the test has been taken in school and a negative result recorded, students will return home and attend school on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> March at 8.45am for a normal school day (with Covid restrictions). Any students who test positive will be held in school until they can be picked up. You will receive an appointment time for your child's lateral flow test and further procedural details later in the week. These details will include the protocols we will have in place should your child test positive. If you have more than one child and you want their appointments to be close together, please let us know via [enquiries@tarletonacademy.org](mailto:enquiries@tarletonacademy.org).

Outstanding education at the heart of the community

To support an efficient testing programme on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March, we are asking for volunteers from our wider community to help us get this done, so that all students will be in a position to return to school on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> March. Volunteers will be assigned to support across one of the following four testing elements:

- Test registration
- Test swabbing supervision
- Test result processing
- Test station administration

If you are able to volunteer, please contact the school via [enquiries@tarletonacademy.org](mailto:enquiries@tarletonacademy.org) with a contact telephone number and a member of staff will get back in touch with you. No volunteers will administer tests as these are done by the students themselves with our guidance. Full training will be provided either online or in person, depending upon availability. All volunteers will take a LFD test prior to commencing. No volunteers will be left unsupervised with students. Your support will be greatly appreciated.

It is crucial that we continue to mitigate any risks of transmission within our schools and for this reason our planning will require all staff in school on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March for a planning/training day. The purpose of the day will be to:

- Re-visit all our Risk Assessments and system of controls
- Ensure rigorous and safe asymptomatic testing for all our students
- Review the school's behaviour and mental health support
- Provide staff planning time for Curriculum and Teaching & Learning
- Provide robust re-integration support for our most vulnerable and disengaged students

Given the scope of training required and the need for all staff to be in school on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March and Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March, we will not be able to provide support in school for our students and the children of key workers on Friday or Monday. Work will be set for students through ClassCharts, however, the subject based Google Chat streams will not be monitored on either of the two days.

School buses will not be running on the day of the testing but will run as normal after that. If transport is an issue, again, do let us know. We know that this will be disruptive for some parents, but our rationale is to limit the disruption to the Monday so that from Tuesday, as many students as possible are back in school learning.

We will expect all students back in full uniform but we are also aware that they may have outgrown shoes and clothing. It is more important that they are back in school so if you anticipate any issues then let us know and we will work around it. If finances are an issue with regards to replacement items (uniform or equipment), then please don't hesitate to contact us so that we can support you with this. If your son/daughter has any items of uniform that are still in good condition but they have outgrown, then we will happily accept donations in school which we will pass on to good homes.

Could you also ensure that their lunch accounts are topped up in advance? Again, if there are any financial issues then do let us know.

We will be revisiting the areas of mental health and wellbeing during the student's reintegration to school but please let us know if there is anything at all you think we should be aware of. If any students are extremely anxious about completing their tests, we are more than happy for parents to attend and support their child. Please let us know if this is the case by contacting [enquiries@tarletonacademy.org](mailto:enquiries@tarletonacademy.org) so we can make arrangements.

As always, thank you for your on-going support.

Yours sincerely,

*M Cunniffe*

Mr M Cunniffe

Head of School