25 February 2021

Dear Parents

I hope that you and your families had a restful and enjoyable half term break and you are all safe and well.

**School re-opening**

As you will be aware, the Prime Minister has now set a date of Monday 8 March for students to begin to return to school. We are very much looking forward to welcoming students back to school and I would like to provide a brief update on how we are planning to manage this return safely.

In line with government guidance for secondary schools, the return of students will be phased from Monday 8th March as we are required to carry out rapid testing of students ahead of their return to the classroom. We are currently working through a precise plan and you will receive details next week of when each year group will be invited into school for testing and when lessons will resume in school.

I know that many of you have already responded to a previous email, asking for your consent to testing and I am very grateful to so many of you for your positive response. Those students for whom we already have consent will be invited in on a staggered basis so that we can carry out testing as safely and efficiently as possible.

**If you have not already provided consent for your child to be tested, please can I urge you to respond as soon as possible to the follow-up email that you have received.** These tests will help to stop the spread of the virus and keep staff and students in school safely.

**Attendance**

In accordance with the latest government guidance, attendance in school will once again be compulsory for all students following their initial return date. We will, of course, work with you and your children to make sure that they enjoy as smooth a transition as possible back into school life. If you have any concerns, please contact your child’s Year Leader in the first instance to discuss how we may be able to offer support.

**Year 11 exams / assessment**

Parents and students in Year 11 may have particular concerns about this year’s GCSEs. The government has now decided that students will receive grades determined by their teacher and we expect to receive further updates regarding the process in the coming weeks. We will share this information as soon as we have it. We do know that teachers will be asked to use a range of evidence when determining grades, including use of questions provided by the exam boards, mock exams, coursework and other work completed, such as essays and in-class tests.

To support teachers to accurately assess students’ progress and provide evidence to contribute to a final teacher assessed judgement, we have provisionally scheduled formal subject assessments for Year 11 to take place in school from **Monday 26 April to Friday 7 May**.

Finally, can I thank you for your continued support through such a challenging time. We will be in touch again next week with full information regarding the re-opening of school.

Stay safe.

With very best wishes.



**Mrs Johnson**

**Headteacher**