



25th February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Return to School – w/c 8th March 2021

As expected earlier this week, the Prime Minister has now confirmed the wider reopening of schools. In order to bring all students and staff back to school as safely as possible, we need to coordinate our return arrangements with the Mass Testing programme.

As originally planned at the start of term, we will be offering asymptomatic testing to all students and staff to support the identification of otherwise undetected positive cases. Being tested is not a condition of return, but we strongly encourage it. We will be conducting testing on site for those who have consented between 2nd -11th March 2021. If you wish to consent for your child to be tested in school you can still do so by completing this form [Washington Academy - NHS Test and Trace consent form for COVID-19 testing \(google.com\)](#) by 9.00am on 1st March 2021. If you have already consented, you do not need to do so again.

Students will receive 3 tests on school site and then be supplied with tests for self-testing at home thereafter.

We will separately send you details of the date and time of your child's first test ASAP. The first test will be carried out and your child should return home immediately afterwards. This may apply to the second test too depending on what year group your child belongs to. To ensure that we get students back into school as soon as we are able we are testing to tight deadlines. It is imperative, therefore, that you ensure that your child attends for testing prior to the 8th March at the precise time that is given. If your child is late it may delay their return to school.

Remote Learning will continue for all students leading up to whole school return on 8th March (although on days of whole group testing this may be set on Classcharts rather than live lessons to avoid disruption). All students will return to school on 8th March 2021 following their regular timetable with the same staggered timings as last term. The remaining tests will take place between 8th -11th March 2021, with 3-5 days between consecutive tests. From w/c 15th March 2021, students will be provided with test kits for self-administration at home.

Attendance from 8th March 2021 is compulsory and your child should only be absent from school if he/she has tested positive, is symptomatic, self-isolating or otherwise unwell.

Our system of controls remains in place, including staggered timings, "bubbles" and enhanced cleaning. The Academy takes very seriously the risks to health and life of COVID-19 and supports all of the guidance and direction to limit the possibility of transmission of the coronavirus in our schools. Therefore, when students return on 8th March 2021, current guidance requires them to wear a face mask over nose and mouth at all times when inside the school building, other than when eating at a dining table. This will now include masks in lessons. If a student has a medically diagnosed condition or disability that makes this a problem, please ensure we are aware of this by contacting their Year Leader in order that we can consider whether to grant an exemption.

We will endeavour to give students the opportunity to remove masks wherever and as much as possible, i.e. during "Line up for Learning" outside and outside time at breaks and lunchtimes, but please be mindful that they will be

wearing a mask for a significant amount of the school day. For this purpose, you should supply your child with a spare mask each day so that they can be changed as and when they become wet, dirty, etc.

If Government guidance changes on the wearing of face masks in school we will contact you further. It is currently our understanding that this will change following the Easter holidays.

Whilst I acknowledge the huge efforts made by students and teachers with Remote Learning, we are excited to be able to return to face-to-face learning in classrooms and I look forward to welcoming everyone back soon.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Hamilton', written in a cursive style.

Mrs S Hamilton
Headteacher