

26th February, 2021

Dear parents/carers

Thank you for your patience regarding the receipt of information concerning the return to school for your children. Thanks also for all your support over the last few months: in particular for the assistance you have given us in engaging students in their remote learning. It has not been easy, but we have been very encouraged by the levels of attendance to live lessons and the completion of assessments etc.

I have spent the last few days following the announcement on Monday in meetings with staff from our school and the Trust agreeing a common approach to the return of students. Each school has a different capacity for testing but we have agreed timescales and processes to ensure that we can bring students back to school in the safest possible way and within the framework and timescales set by the DfE. As you know, we always try to return students to their learning as quickly as we can, but in the current circumstances we have had to make some difficult decisions regarding the order of student return and have based this on the expectation from the DfE that Yrs 10-13 return first. We have therefore agreed and risk assessed the following sequence for return which ensures that all students are back in school by Monday 15th March as per expectations. In order for us to achieve this, our testing of students needs to start on WEDNESDAY 3rd March. The DfE have given schools permission to do this and it ensures that all students can be tested at least once before their first day in school. We have then put a testing timetable together to ensure that the return of students can be controlled and balanced with the remote and live lessons which will continue for each year group until the day they are due back in. The most restrictive barrier to our return is the insistence that there can only be a maximum of 5 days between tests. This means that the order for testing had to be carefully planned. Additionally, a staggered return to lesson will achieve a calm reintegration to support all the needs of our learners.

Students will return to school on the following days:

Monday 8 th March	Staff return
Tuesday 9 th March	Yr11, 12 and 13 students return
Wednesday 10 th March	Yr10 students return
Thursday 11 th March	Yr7 students return
Friday 12 th March	Yr8 students return
Monday 15 th March	Yr9 students return

Testing days before students return to school:

Wednesday 3 rd March	Yr11 and Yr13
Thursday 4 th March	Yr10 and Yr12
Friday 5 th March	Yr7
Monday 8 th March	Yr11 and Yr13 (<i>second test</i>)
Tuesday 9 th March	Y10 (<i>second test</i>)
Wednesday 10 th March	Yr7 (<i>second test</i>)
Thursday 11 th March	Yr8
Friday 12 th March	Yr9

Please note: remote live lessons will not occur on testing days. Repeat tests will continue until the 19th March if all goes to plan. Students will receive home testing kits for use after their third test in school. We will be testing between 250 and 450 students per day on this model. As you can see, it is a complicated process which is affected by testing capacity and the gap of 3-5 days between tests. Having worked through various models, this is the one that will work best for us at SBL.

We will today be sending out a letter for consent with additional information regarding the testing times for your child. They will be conducted in tutor groups and there are clear expectations regarding arrival and conduct during the test that will need to be followed. We have also completed a testing video that students will need to watch. All this information will also go onto the website once finalised.

Students will need their own facemasks to wear on entry to the testing site. From their return, they will also be required to always wear facemasks inside the building: including in lessons. Those with current existing exemptions will be issued with a lanyard. Students will receive a full briefing on the day they return and reminders of their zones and other key information. We have also had a new set of toilets put in so that our Yr9 students will no longer be using the outside portable units.

Return of laptops, chrome books and devices

If you have received a laptop or device from the school, please ensure that your son/daughter brings it with them on the first day that they return to school full-time (not on their first testing day as remote lessons will continue until they return). Students must hand the device to their tutors first thing in the morning so that it can be recorded. The devices will be needed for immediate use in lessons across all year groups so your support with their prompt return will be greatly appreciated.

For those student in Years 7 and 10 participating in the Action Tutoring programme, sessions will continue at school at the usual times from Monday the 15th of March:

- Year 10 English, Monday 15th March, 2:05-3:05pm
- Year 10 Maths, Monday 15th March, 3:15-4:15pm
- Year 7 Maths, Tuesday 16th March, 3:10-4:10pm

Students continuing to attend the Critical Worker Group over the course of the week commencing 8th March should assemble in a socially distanced way outside the main school entrance each morning and must be careful not to mix with students attending school to be tested. This provision will continue for your child until their year group return to school.

I hope the information over the next few days is of use and all at SBL are looking forward to students returning over the next few weeks.

Kind regards



Mr D Anderson
Principal