



24 February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Reopening 8 March 2021 and update Covid-19

I am writing to give you an update on the guidance we have received from Government and the Department for Education (DfE), following the announcement made by the Prime Minister on the evening of Monday 22 February 2021. We are delighted with the news that our children can return to us for full-time education before the Easter break and we are looking forward to welcoming them back. Although it is great news that lockdown restrictions are being eased with the education of children being a priority, the full information regarding the return to full-time education was not made clear at the Prime Minister's press briefing.

I know that home schooling has been a challenge during this third national lockdown, and I wish to take this opportunity to thank you once again for your support and understanding – it is much appreciated. Once more we have shown that working together, in partnership, we have been able to support each other and work collectively to get through another challenging period in our lives.

The following information is based on the guidance issued to schools following the Prime Minister's briefing:

[Actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak)

Asymptomatic Testing using Lateral Flow Tests

The plan by Government to reopen secondary schools is based on mass testing using Lateral Flow Tests (LFT)), the guidance states:

“Secondary schools should offer pupils testing at an on-site ATS from 8 March. Testing and return of pupils can be phased during the first week to manage the number of pupils passing through the test site at any one time. You should offer 3 tests each one being between 3 to 5 days apart.

You have the flexibility to consider how best to deliver testing on a phased basis from 8 March, depending on your circumstances and local arrangements, but you should prioritise vulnerable children and children of critical workers, and year groups 10 to 13.

Pupils should return to face-to-face education following their first negative test result. Pupils not undergoing testing should attend school in line with your phased return arrangements. Schools will have discretion on how to test students over that week as they return to the classroom.”

We have previously established an in-school Asymptomatic Testing Site (AST) and regular testing of members of staff, have all returned negative results through use of the NHS Track and Trace Testing System.

Reopening linked to Lateral Flow Tests

Following the Government guidance, we will be reopening school on the following basis:

	Lateral Flow Test Schedule		Phased reopening
	9.30 to 11.30	12.30 to 2.30	Year groups in school
Monday 8 March	Year 11	Years 12 & 13	Year 11 from 9.15am to 14.50 Years 12 & 13 from 12.30pm
Tuesday 9 March	Year 10		Year 10 - 9.15am to 14.50 Year 11 - 8.30am to 3.00pm Years 12 and 13 as timetable
Wednesday 10 March	Year 7		Year 7 - 9.15am to 14.50 Years 10, 11, 12 and 13 as timetable
Thursday 11 March	Year 8	Year 11	Year 8 - 9.15am to 14.55 Years 7, 10, 11, 12 and 13 as timetable
Friday 12 March	Year 9	Years 12 & 13	Year 9 - 9.15am to 15.50 Years 7, 8, 10, 11, 12 and 13 as timetable

	Lateral Flow Test Schedule		Year groups in school all day as usual timetable
	Morning	afternoon	
Monday 15 March	Year 10	Year 8	All
Tuesday 16 March	Year 7		All
Wednesday 17 March	Year 9	Year 11	All
Thursday 18 March		Years 12 & 13	All
Friday 19 March	Year 10	Year 8	All

	Lateral Flow Test Schedule		Year groups in school all day as usual timetable
	morning	afternoon	
Monday 22 March	Year 7	Year 9	All
Tuesday 23 March			All
Wednesday 24 March			All
Thursday 25 March			All
Friday 26 March			All

This schedule may be subject to change, but I want you to be made aware, as soon as possible, that the Government guidance means not all secondary school pupils are to return to school on Monday 8 March 2021. Any change will be due to the second and third test being on day six for some year groups

Home testing

In addition to Asymptomatic Testing in school, the guidance has a new section regarding Home Testing, this is a requirement of the wider reopening of schools. The guidance, states:

“Both pupils and staff in secondary schools will be supplied with LFD test kits to self swab and test themselves twice a week at home. Staff and pupils must report their result to NHS Test and Trace as soon as the test is completed either online or by telephone as per the instructions in the home test kit.”

The reason for three tests in school is to identify asymptomatic cases and provide pupils with advice and practice on how to complete a self-swab using a Lateral Flow Test before they start testing themselves whilst at home.

Included in this section of Home Testing the advice states:

“Staff or pupils with a positive LFD test result will need to self-isolate in line with the stay-at-home guidance. They will also need to arrange a lab-based polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test to confirm the result if the test was done at home.”

The need for a PCR test as a follow-up to a Lateral Flow Test is new advice and guidance and only applies to a positive result from home testing.

As you look at the schedule you will see that the final third set of testing ends on Tuesday 23 March 2021 and from this date, we will be issuing the Home Testing Kits to all pupils. We have begun to receive the packs in school for use by members of staff and in addition to the full testing kit there is a step-by-step guide on how to conduct a Lateral Flow Test at home. We expect to receive a further supply for use by our children soon.

Consent

Many thanks to all parents, carers and students who have completed their return and given consent for the Lateral Flow Test, we have over fifty per cent giving consent. To be able to complete the online registration system we would appreciate all consent forms to be returned by Wednesday 3 March. If you have misplaced or accidentally deleted the notification over ParentMail, please contact Mrs Peers by email PRS@titussaltschool.co.uk and she will send you another copy of the online form. As all pupils need to be pre-registered before taking a Lateral Flow Test and the entering of information must be done manually, this will be time consuming and therefore your help in returning the form by Wednesday 3 March is much appreciated.

Face masks

The Guidance has a change to previous guidance on the wearing of face masks and now includes the following statement – “that face coverings should be worn in classrooms”.

I appreciate that this may cause concern and we are currently reviewing ways that we can provide children with a break between some lessons to go outside for a short period of time to enable them to take off their mask and be in fresh air outdoors. This will be in addition to their staggered break time and lunch time.

I appreciate there is a lot of information in this letter and it may appear a little contradictory in places, but we are working within the guidance issued by Government and the DfE. Once again, I wish to thank you for your continued support and understanding as we respond to the advice and guidance published to school.

Yours sincerely



Ian Morrel

Headteacher