

2 March 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

Following the Government announcement last week stating all students will return to school from the week beginning Monday 8 March, we are writing to provide you with more detailed plans.

We are delighted to be welcoming the students back but wish to ensure it is done in a safe and timely manner. There will be a phased return for each year group that will allow onsite lateral flow testing to be completed for all students who consent to be tested. The guidelines suggest three lateral flow tests are completed followed by students self-testing at home. Further information will be provided about home testing next week.

Please accept our apologies for the length of this letter, but we want to provide you with as much information as possible.

Attendance from Monday 8 March is mandatory. As such we will expect all students to attend lessons unless they are shielding, ill or display covid-19 symptoms. We appreciate some of you may be anxious about returning to school. The mental and emotional well-being of students is important. If there are specific concerns, please contact the Raising Standards Leader or the main office. Outlined below are some agencies that will also provide support:

- The [Essex Wellbeing Service](#) will be providing navigators to help you find the right support for pupils' and their families' emotional wellbeing and mental health needs on the return to education. This is an early intervention offer to provide additional support to education settings on top of what you will already be offering. The Essex Wellbeing Service has developed a navigator service to both signpost and provide a triage service depending on the needs of your pupils and their families.
 - To access the [Essex Wellbeing Service](#) navigators, phone this number: 0300 303 9988
 - This is accessible from the 8th March 2021.
 - Families can use this directly, or request support from school/setting staff.
 - There will be promotional materials available to share this vital information with families.
- Recovery and Return to Educational Settings suite of resources has two further webinars for families:
 - Part 1: [Looking after yourself](#) (28mins)
 - Part 2: [Looking after your family](#) (39mins)
 - Essex Local Offer: [Coronavirus support wellbeing and mental health](#)
- The Essential Living Fund is available for families who need emergency help with heating, water, food, bills and other essential household items. Families can call 0300 7900 124 (8:45am-5:00pm). www.southend.gov.uk/ELFforessex

Testing for covid-19

The school will offer three tests to every student following receipt of the consent form, which you have been sent previously. This will take time to complete but we will attempt to cause minimal disruption to lessons.

Students will be invited to be tested at specific times before returning to school to minimise the risk of spreading infection. **Face masks must be worn.** On the 'test only day', students will take the supervised test then they can return home. A message will be sent to notify if the test is positive or negative. Teachers will set a reduced amount of work to be completed as per the normal timetable.

If the allocated time for testing is not possible due to transport issues, please contact the school to discuss an alternative time.

Tests 2 and 3 will be completed when the students are in school. They will be given an allocated time to leave lessons.

The table below outlines the dates for testing and return to school.

Year group	Test 1 & return to school	Test 2	Test 3
Year 7	<p>Monday 8 March - Test only</p> <p>No live lessons 30-minute task set for each timetabled lesson</p> <p>Return to school Tuesday 9 March</p>	12/3/21	17/3/21
Year 8	<p>Thursday 11 March - Test only</p> <p>No live lessons 30-minute task set for each timetabled lesson</p> <p>Return to school Friday 12 March</p>	16/3/21	19/3/21
Year 9	<p>Wednesday 10 March - Test only</p> <p>No live lessons 30-minute task set for each timetabled lesson</p> <p>Return to school Thursday 11 March</p>	15/3/21	18/3/21
Year 10	<p>Friday 5 March - Test only</p> <p>No live lessons 30-minute task set for each timetabled lesson</p> <p>Return to school Monday 8 March</p>	9/3/21	15/3/21 and 16/3/21
Year 11	<p>Thursday 4 March - Test only</p> <p>No live lessons 30-minute task set for each timetabled lesson</p> <p>Return to school Monday 8 March</p>	8/3 and 9/3	11/3/21 and 12/3/21

Some testing may need to be completed after 3.00 p.m. If this is not possible due to transport or other issues, please contact the school.

Week beginning Monday 8 March there will be no live lessons and all work will be uploaded to Teams. Teachers will monitor lessons attendance.

Start and end of the day

The normal school timings will operate.

Students should use the following entrances to avoid mixing of year groups.

- Year 7 Entrance near astroturf area
- Year 8 Entrance near astroturf area
- Year 9 Main gates
- Year 10 Main gates
- Year 11 Pedestrian gates → canteen

During the day

Students will have lessons in their normal classrooms, but one-way systems will operate to minimise mixing during movement time.

Year group social zones will operate, and it is important students remain in these areas to minimise year group mixing. Failure to follow these expectations will result in appropriate sanctions being used.

	Food	Outside	Inside	Toilets
Year 7	Canteen at 12.10p.m.	Back courts	Library and Humanities classrooms	New Hall
Year 8	Café at 12.10 p.m.	Field	Sports Hall	Main corridor
Year 9	Canteen at 12.30p.m.	Front courts	Hall	Main corridor
Year 10	Café at 12.30 p.m.	Field	English Area and classrooms	New Hall
Year 11	Café at 11.55 a.m.	Covered picnic area	Bois Hall	Bois Hall

Students will be expected to wear school uniform but will be allowed to wear PE kit on the days when Physical Education is timetabled.

We appreciate after school provision is a vital part of the extended curriculum. However, at the current time there will be no after school activities or clubs until after Easter, with the exception of additional support for targeted catch-up support for Year 11 students.

Behaviour expectations

It is important to remember the return to school does not mean the covid-19 virus has disappeared. Students will be expected to follow the previous expectations of social distancing and hand hygiene to minimise the risk of infection.

Face masks will be expected to be worn in classrooms where the 2-metre social distancing rule cannot be applied, during movement in corridors and in social zones where social distancing is not possible. We appreciate some students are exempt from wearing face masks on medical grounds. Please contact the school if this is the case to explain the reasons. The wearing of face masks will be reviewed by the Government after three weeks.

Students who do not bring a face mask to school will be provided with one at a cost of 50p.

Year 11 GCSE/BTEC grades

Last week initial guidance was published to outline how grades will be awarded in the summer. Further guidance will be issued in the next few weeks. When we have more specific information, we will invite you to Parent Information Evening to provide full details.

The important factor for Year 11 students to remember when they return to school, is that they can still make a significant difference to their final grade by fully engaging in lessons.

Please discuss the contents of this letter with your child/children so we can ensure all students return to school in the safest environment.

Finally, we would like to thank you for your continued support. Hopefully, this will be the last time we have to have a lockdown with home schooling or remote learning.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'R James', written on a light blue background.

R James

NEMAT CEO/Executive Headteacher