

24 February 2021

Dear Parent or Carer,

It was announced on Monday 22 February 2021 that all schools will reopen to all pupils on Monday 8 March 2021. Schools are expected to have asymptomatic COVID-19 testing in place, and staff and students are advised to wear face coverings in all areas, including classrooms, as a temporary extra measure.

Gavin Williamson, Secretary of State for Education, has advised schools that attendance from Monday 8 March is mandatory, and that secondary schools are able to phase return over the week of 8 March to allow students to be offered testing on return. We will take some time this week to consider how best to manage this and will provide you with full details early next week.

### **High quality teaching and catch-up**

The school will have been closed to almost all pupils for eight weeks by the time we return on Monday 8 March. We have worked hard to provide high quality remote learning, and we are delighted by the response from our young people, but this could never fully replace classroom-based learning. We believe that the best way to support catch-up is to provide high quality teaching day in, day out.

We have a very clear understanding of what high quality teaching and learning looks like, and I would like to bring my teaching staff together for three days next week in order to make sure this understanding is fully shared across the school. I want to hit the ground running in two weeks, and to further support this I would also like to allow my teaching staff some time to get ready for pupils' return.

Therefore, I intend to run informal INSET days on **Wednesday 3 March** and **Thursday 4 March** next week for teaching staff, and allow teachers all day on **Friday 5 March** to prepare for pupils' return on the following Monday.

The school will remain open to vulnerable children and children of key workers as normal next week. However, to allow teachers to fully participate in INSET and to prepare for pupils' return, we will not be providing 'live' lessons on the three days mentioned above. Instead, I will ask teachers to set either open-ended, research-based tasks to allow pupils some time to investigate the topics that will be covered when they return, or tasks designed to consolidate or assess topics that have been recently taught. All set tasks will be worthwhile, but will not be checked by teachers, unless it is a key assessment.

This approach will support teachers to be ready to offer high quality lessons and will allow pupils some time to catch-up with any outstanding work.

We are delighted to be able to welcome pupils back after such a long time away, and we are determined to offer them the high-quality teaching that they will need to catch-up. I appreciate your support with this.

I would like to thank you for your continued support during this very difficult time, and I very much look forward to welcoming back our young people on Monday 8 March. I will write to you again early next week with further details.

Yours faithfully,



Mr B Worth  
Headteacher