

25 February 2021

Dear Parent/Carers

Reopening of schools from Monday 8 March

I am writing to you following the government's announcement about the return to school for all secondary school students from Monday 8 March. We are currently preparing to welcome back all students on a phased return from this date.

The school is thankful for all you have done to support students with remote learning, and would like to congratulate our students on their fantastic efforts in this area. However, as a school we know that we can have a greater impact working with students face to face when they return to school. This letter outlines key information you need to know in relation to the full return to school. Alongside this letter, an additional letter will be sent setting out the arrangements for your child and their phased return to school at the beginning of next week.

Covid-Safe Measures

We are working to keep our school as safe as possible. All systems that were in place at the end of the Autumn Term will continue.

These include:

- Staggered timings of the school day and use of different school entrances
- Separate year group bubbles
- Students studying in their dedicated zones
- Split break / lunches and designated zones
- Enhanced cleaning and hand washing / sanitising

In addition to existing control measures, students and staff will now be required to wear a face covering at all times when inside the building. Please ensure that your child has a suitable face covering for each day which should be worn during lessons and in communal areas inside the building. The school's expectation is that all students arrive at school each day with a face covering, unless medically exempt. The Government has said this additional control measure will be in place until Easter and will be reviewed at this time.

There is also going to be testing for those without coronavirus symptoms (asymptomatic) using new, quicker tests known as 'lateral flow tests'.

These additional protective measures are designed to ensure that staff and students can remain in school safely.

Lateral Flow Testing

All students need to be offered a lateral flow test before they return to school. In order to carry out these lateral flow tests we require consent from all parent/carers. If your child is 16 years or over they should provide consent themselves. As I am sure you can appreciate, this provides a significant logistical challenge, particularly as we are a large school and therefore, we will have a phased return to school starting with students that were due to sit exams this summer.

www.wellingschool-tkat.org

Headteacher:

Mr R Pett BA Hons, MA, NPQH

Executive Headteacher:

Mr D Hatley B.Ed (Hons), NPQH

Welling School
Elsa Road,
Welling,
Kent, DA16 1LB

Tel: 020 8304 8531

Fax: 020 8301 6414

Email: admin@wellingschool-tkat.org

Twitter: [@welling_school](https://twitter.com/welling_school)



When your child is not back in school, they will be expected to continue with home learning during this week. In order to facilitate a phased return of students and the completion of lateral flow testing, the live component of home learning will be suspended for the week beginning Monday 8 March. Teachers will still set lessons via Google Classroom and there will be links to videos and lesson content that will account for the length of the lesson. Students that are currently attending the onsite provision will still be able to access this if their year group has not returned to school. From Monday 15 March all students will have returned to school.

In order to plan effectively for lateral flow tests we require consent forms to be completed by all parent/carers or students if they are 16 or over, by **12.00 on Wednesday 3 March**. Our experience has been when parent/carers do not provide consent in advance of their child attending school, the time taken to complete the test is significantly longer.

Please complete as a matter of priority the consent form by clicking on the link:

<https://forms.gle/D8LpbT1aFFkQHKFF8>

Students will 'self-swab' and will be supervised by trained staff. The 'lateral flow' tests are quick and easy using a swab of their nose and throat.

Results of the test will be provided by the NHS once students have registered their details. The school will only communicate to parent/carers if there is a positive result.

Students only need to be tested once before they are able to return to school. They then will have another two tests in school. They will then be provided with a home test pack so that they may test themselves at home regularly.

Attendance

Once students return to school, attendance will be mandatory and our usual rules on attendance will apply.

As a reminder, pupils should self-isolate and not come to school if they have coronavirus symptoms or have tested positive, live with someone who has symptoms or have tested positive or are a close contact of someone who has tested positive.

Please take the time to help prepare your child for their return to school. When we return all the usual expectations regarding equipment, uniform and conduct will be in place. We therefore recommend that you check school uniform, shoes and equipment. If there are any issues and you need our help please contact your child's Head of Year or Care & Guidance Assistant before your child is due to return. Please also do everything you can to keep encouraging your child to stay positive and focused on their remote learning. The last few months have undoubtedly been challenging but the end is in sight and we are excited to welcome your child back to Welling School.

We are aware that whilst the return to school is a welcome development in the government's lifting of restrictions, students may well need support in re-engaging with their academic lives and so our phased return will also allow us to plan specific activities in the first few days of being back at school which will focus on re-establishing relationships, routines and healthy lifestyles.

As always, if you have any queries regarding this letter please email the school on enquiries@wellingschool-tkat.org and we will respond.

With very best wishes



Mr R Pett
Headteacher