

27 February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

### **The reopening of schools from Monday 8 March 2021**

I would like to thank all parents and carers for your continued support through the present challenges we all face. Many parents/carers have taken the time to thank colleagues at the academy for the support, care and learning provided and I wanted to acknowledge how appreciative this has been. It has lifted the spirits of staff during this time. I think it is also important to mention how proud we are of our wonderful children who have maximised the opportunities offered through online live lessons.

We are delighted to welcome our children back to the academy **from** the 8 March. The return will be organised in a way that enables us to effectively manage the revised COVID arrangements. To ensure the phased return is maximised, staff will be focusing on additional preparation and planning during the week of 1 March and there may be some disruption to the number of live lessons being taught by staff, I ask for your patience and understanding during this time.

We will be inviting children in for **testing only on Thursday 4 March** (Year 10 and 11) **and Friday 5 March** (Year 7, 8 and 9). You will receive a text / email and letter outlining a specific time for your child to **come in for a test and then return** home and continue with their online learning. Tests should take no longer than 20 - 30 minutes. Tests will only be allocated to students where we have consent provided. If you have yet to provide consent, please respond to the following survey <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1uq4gQn6jnwsaxoyvEdkBjmBKcplMVyM3kvT9IZqLwA/edit> sent out from Mrs House, Business Manager. I have outlined further details regarding testing later in this letter.

If your child has had access to key worker / vulnerable provision this will continue until their date of return.

Children will return from Monday 8 March 2021. This means that the return of students will be staggered by year group in the following way:

<b>Year 11</b>	<b>Monday 8 March onwards</b>
<b>Year 10</b>	<b>Monday 8 March onwards</b>
<b>Year 9</b>	<b>Tuesday 9 March onwards</b>
<b>Years 7 and 8</b>	<b>Wednesday 10 March onwards</b>

### **High expectations to enable safety and learning**

Our expectations of all our children remain high as always, whether standards of conduct and respect for others, pride in wearing our full uniform or effort when learning, all these standards uphold who we are. Please could I ask that you take this opportunity before we return to check that your child is equipped for school with full uniform, their school planner, and a bag to carry essential school equipment such as a pencil case (containing a pen, pencil and ruler) and PE kit.

Full details of our uniform policy are available on our website at the following link: <https://www.bydales.outwood.com/uniform> and financial support is available if required. A copy of our Hardship Policy and Application Form can be downloaded at <https://www.bydales.outwood.com/policies> If you would welcome support or require further details please contact our staff team via our main reception at [enquiries@bydales.outwood.com](mailto:enquiries@bydales.outwood.com).

As we are now a cashless academy, can you please also ensure your child's 'Parent Pay' account is sufficiently topped up online in advance via [www.parentpay.com](http://www.parentpay.com) so they can access food at break and lunchtime.

I have reviewed our existing risk assessments for the safe return of students and will share with you via our website before Monday 8 March 2021. Please be assured that our commitment to ensuring a safe environment for students and staff remains and all relevant control measures will be in place. You will be aware that the government has revised the guidance around the wearing of masks in secondary schools so that masks will be worn inside the building whenever social distancing cannot be maintained, including within classrooms. There will be a limited number of exceptions such as those who are medically exempt and for practical reasons such as when seated in the dining area to eat, or during PE lessons. Please could I ask for your support in ensuring that your child has a mask when they attend school each day.

I would also ask that you discuss the importance of social distancing on the way to and from the academy. We work hard to maintain positive relationships with our community and have the highest expectations for all students who attend Bydales and this includes excellent behaviour on the way to and from the academy. All students should be mindful and respectful of all members of the community.

### **Information relating to COVID testing arrangements in school**

Following recent government announcements you will be aware that three Lateral Flow Tests (LFT) will be offered to all students upon their return to school. Lateral Flow Testing is specifically for those who do not present any symptoms of Covid 19 so are asymptomatic. These will be carried out prior to and in the first two weeks of their return with three to five days between each test.

The second and third tests will then be carried out within three to five days during the first two weeks of the student's return to school. Students who have had three tests in school will be provided with home testing kits to continue the testing process. We will share more details about home testing kits shortly.

Along with the other protective measures we are taking, these tests can help staff and students remain in school safely. Up to one third of people who have coronavirus experience no symptoms. By testing we will help to stop the virus spread and help to keep our school open as safely as possible. The test is voluntary. However, we are participating as a school and I would encourage all students and staff to take part as well.

Alongside this letter, please read this Government instructional leaflet with more information about the tests themselves. Please also read our Testing Privacy Statement and you may find the Testing Data Protection Frequently Asked Questions helpful too. Links for all this information can be found on the homepage of the academy website. If you have previously provided consent for your child to be tested, you do not need to take any action unless you wish to withdraw consent. If you are happy for your child to be tested, complete this form: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1uq4gQn6jnwSaxoyvEdkBjmbKcplMVyM3kvT9lZqLwA/edit>

The lateral flow tests are quick and easy using a swab of your nose and throat. Those taking the test in the academy will be supervised by trained staff. Results take around half an hour from testing and will be shared directly with staff and students participating. Where participants are under-16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed.

I hope that the information in this letter is helpful and clear. **Please complete the consent form, if you are happy for your child to take a COVID-19 test. Please do this as soon as possible.** If you have any questions regarding testing, please email Mrs House our Business Manager at [a.house@bydales.outwood.com](mailto:a.house@bydales.outwood.com)

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you again for your support. Please do continue to take care and stay safe.

Your sincerely



**Seana Rice**

**Principal**

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What if a student tests positive?**

Participating staff and students who test positive will be informed about their results individually. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be notified. Guidance on safe travel and additional precautions will be provided along with test results.

Students will need to take a further 'PCR test' (similar to those done in local and regional testing sites) on the same day (or as soon as possible). You can go to [www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test](https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test) or call 119 to book a follow-up test. When ordering a PCR test themselves, they should choose to visit a drive-through test site if possible, as it is faster than requesting a home test.

During this time while they wait for the PCR result (via text / email) they will need to self-isolate.

If the PCR test returns a positive result you will have to self-isolate and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace. Please also inform the School of any result.

### **What happens if the test is negative?**

They will be able to stay in school and resume their activities as normal. A small number of students may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason.

### **What if a close contact at school tests positive?**

A close contact of someone in school who has tested positive for COVID-19 will be required to self-isolate for 10 days. They should also be NHS Test and Trace service. What if my child develops symptoms?

This testing programme at school is for people with no symptoms. If your child develops symptoms at any time (such as a high temperature; a new, continuous cough; or a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste) they must immediately self-isolate, and book a test by calling 119 (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) or 0300 303 2713 (Scotland) or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.