



Fulford School

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26th February 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am delighted that we will be able to welcome pupils back to school from Monday 8th March.

Lateral Flow Tests

As we are all aware, nothing can take the place of face-to-face teaching. Schools offer so much more than academic study; they have a crucial role to play in underpinning the fabric of society. We often don't appreciate what we have until it is taken away. Many of our young people have been absent from classrooms for far too long and it is right that we get them back into school as quickly as possible. With this in mind, we will be welcoming all pupils back on Monday March 8th. We will not be staggering their return. In order to do this and give the opportunity for lateral flow testing to commence prior to their return, we are able to start delivering lateral flow tests from Monday 1st March.

For those families that wish to use lateral flow tests, it is advised that pupils have three supervised lateral flow tests before they start testing at home. During these sessions, pupils will be supported by adults as they complete their tests. I very much believe this is best done at community testing centres where those supporting the tests have a great deal of experience. These sites will be available from Monday 1st March and can be accessed throughout the day including weekends. There should be a 3 to 5-day window between each test. I would expect by 8th March pupils who were wishing to be tested would have started to access these tests via the community centres. We will have testing facilities within school from Monday 8th March. We can support pupils who need an extension of supervision or those who for any reason cannot access the community sites.

We do want our focus to be on re-establishing good learning patterns and engaging pupils back into the core purpose of school. Testing at community centres will enable us to put our focus into teaching and learning rather than testing.

We have been asked by the testing centres to send out the link for appointments on Sunday evening. We will do this via Groupcall. We have been advised that all family members over 11 years old can be tested at the same time.

Face coverings in classrooms

All members of our community are expected to wear face covering inside buildings, including classrooms. It is incumbent on us as a school to do all we can to minimise the spread of the virus. Each confirmed case in school means distress and concern within our community as pupils and staff have to self-isolate and cannot attend school. Some within our community become very unwell. Face coverings are one of the ways of reducing transmission and must be worn. There will be pupils and staff who have genuine reasons why they cannot wear face coverings. However, these do need to be genuine reasons and not just because they are uncomfortable or pupils just don't like wearing them. As a community, we have a shared responsibility to each other. If your child has a medical exemption from wearing face coverings, then please let Mr Harris know in writing and we will support them. All pupils who are not exempt are expected to bring a face covering to school as part of their basic equipment.

Year 11 and 13

Yesterday Ofqual released information on how GCSE and A-Level students will be graded this summer.

Grades will be awarded and determined by teachers, with pupils only assessed on what they have been taught. No algorithms will be used. Teachers will submit grades to exam boards by Friday 18 June. This allows as much teaching time as possible before teachers make their assessments.

Results days for GCSE, A-level and some vocational qualifications will take place in the week beginning 9th August – Tuesday 10th for A Level and Thursday 12th for GCSE.

To support teachers in making their judgements, exam boards will provide detailed guidance before the end of the Spring term. These will include the opportunity to use previous and new exam questions. There is no compulsion to use these materials. Evidence for awarding grades will come from a number of sources and there will be both internal and external quality assurance of the grading. Pupils will be able to appeal to exams boards if they disagree with the grade given by the school.

The school will now await the detailed guidance from the exam boards and draw up a plan for how it intends to use data already collected and future assessment for pupils. We will support the integrity of the examination system giving pupils every opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. Can I again please ask for patience as we work through our response to the documentation. Mr Rosie will write next week to pupils and parents and carers of Year 11 and 13 pupils with further information. What is important is for pupils to continue to engage in their learning between now and the final teacher assessment. Any specific questions should be directed to Mr Rosie following his letter next week and not to individual teachers who will not be able to speculate about what grade will be given.

Wellbeing conversation

Friday 5th March will see the last day of home learning. We very much hope to keep all pupils in school for the remainder of the academic year. Everyone's experience of home learning will have been different. During the day, we will be inviting all pupils in years 7 to 11 to have a conversation, via Teams, with their form tutor. It will be an informal chat to gauge how things have gone during lock down and to look forward to a return to school the following Monday. Work for all lessons that day will be set through Classcharts.

Students in Year 12 and 13 will respond to progress reviews and Ms Davies will be in touch with students with further information.

Expectations

The strength of our school lies within its values and core purpose. We are here to Realise Potential and Create the Future. We have had a challenging time and there will be challenges ahead. We must work together for the good of us all. We want to support and care for all on their return and focus on re-engagement with the school, getting children and young people back into classrooms and learning. We have clear behaviour and uniform expectations which we will remind pupils about on their return. These are not only aligned to our risk assessment but also our general way of doing things 'The Fulford Way'. Please support us by ensuring your children come to school in the correct uniform and with the right equipment ready to do the right thing.

We are ready to welcome pupils back where they belong. We can't wait!

Yours sincerely,



Steve Lewis
Head Teacher



The South York Multi-Academy Trust.

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