



St. Julie's Catholic High School

Headteacher: Mr. T. Alderman

"Serve the good God well with much liberty of spirit"

2 March 2021

Dear parents and carers,

I hope you are all well and are looking forward to your children returning to full time education in school shortly. In school, we are all delighted to be making plans for a safe return to school life. However, it is this point about school safety that I would like to address first.

Asymptomatic Testing

The Government and in particular the Department for Education, in consultation with Public Health England, has stated that students will return to school from 8 March, rather than on 8 March. This is to support the safe return of students and staff through the provision of asymptomatic COVID-19 self-testing in school, the first of 3 rounds of testing to be completed before Easter. To ensure this is done efficiently, effectively, safely and comfortably we have commissioned a Local Authority approved company to support the self-testing process.

It is really important that students and staff consent to the self-testing in school, for the health and safety of all who attend school and their families. This is due to the nature of this virus, which presents no symptoms in around 30% of all infections, meaning asymptomatic people can be spreading the virus to other people unknowingly for days on end. This self -testing process can eliminate this uncertainty and I would appeal to anyone and everyone returning to school to provide their consent for self-testing. You will receive a separate request for this consent. Remember, any positive cases within school will result in a sizeable group of other students being sent home to isolate also, usually between 25 to 50 students. This likely event can be foreseen but can be mitigated against through the self-testing process.

Testing will start on Monday 8 March and we will be welcoming all year groups back over the course of 2 days of testing. Students must only attend at the specified times as we will be managing the registration of students for the self-testing process, supervising the testing and dealing with any issues arising from the return of each individual year group at a time. We will not have provision for students outside of their specified time of arrival. Below is a table to highlight the time and date of arrival per year group:

Arrival time	Monday 8 March	Tuesday 9 March
8.30 – 8.45am	Year 7	Year 9
10.30 – 10.45am	Year 8	Year 10
12.15 – 12.30pm	Year 11	Year 12 & 13

As you can see, we are planning an ambitious return to full teaching for all students in school by Tuesday afternoon in the first week, supporting students to consolidate their remote learning and moving on to the next stage in their learning journey. In order to achieve this ambitious plan, we need parents to support us in our efforts to complete the first stage of testing by discussing the self-testing process with your daughter or son and the importance of arriving to school at the correct, designated time.

Face coverings

Students will be returning to school in their full school uniform. In addition to this, students

must bring a face mask to school every day. These are required for travel on public transport and to enter shops. Schools are now required, from 8 March up until the Easter break, to '**always ensure face coverings are used in recommended circumstances**', specifically '**that face coverings should be worn in classrooms or during activities unless social distancing can be maintained.**' (Schools coronavirus (COVID-19) operational guidance, February 2021). Again, please support us by discussing these requirements with your daughter or son, so we spend less time in school doing so.

Exam grades

I think it is important that all members of our community know the process by which exam grades will awarded this summer. The Government has determined that teachers are best placed to provide a teacher assessed grade, based on a variety of evidence including assignments, coursework, in class assessments as well as mock exams, which will be conducted for exam years in April, after the Easter break. In order to provide a teacher assessed grade to the exam boards by 18 June, we will start a process of identification, quality assurance, standardisation and moderation in the week beginning 22 March 2021 and this 11 stage process will continue over 10 school weeks. Please bear with us during this time as we will essentially be carrying out the work of several different exam boards in order to arrive at a teacher assessed grade which meets the criteria set by the Government.

Finally, **I would like to thank all parents and carers** for your understanding and your determination during these very challenging weeks. You have had to manage many changes, find new ways of working, attend parents evening via video link and continue to motivate and challenge your daughters and sons to give of their best and do the best they can. In return, please be assured that all members of staff in school will do the same for your children as they return to us. However, if there is something more we can do, please do contact school and let us know. As ever, the weekly newsletter, which can be seen on the website every Friday, is a great source of information and holds contact details for various staff within school who can help.

Best wishes,



Tim Alderman

Headteacher