



26th February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to you to outline plans for the return of students **from Monday, 8th March 2021.**

As you will appreciate, we are very much still at the planning stage because, as part of the return to school, all students (via their parents) are encouraged to consent to being tested three times in the space of the first two weeks. This means that we will have to arrange and carry out approximately 2700 tests in that period of time. In all honesty, it is not the actual test that takes the time: it is the registration which has to be done individually on each occasion.

Therefore, whilst I want to give you as much information as I can as swiftly as I can, all of this has to remain subject to change at the moment. I will do my best to keep in touch with you regularly to update and confirm the plan as we get nearer to the return date. Please, expect to receive further letters and messages next week.

Earlier this week, the DfE did a U turn and agreed that schools could invite students in prior to Monday 8th March in order to start the testing process. By doing this, we can minimize the impact on the timetable from 8th March, so that as much teaching can take place as possible. To do anything otherwise would mean that we spend a lot of every day testing students, which is not what we want. We want students to be in school learning.

Each student has to have one test carried out prior to returning. Otherwise, if we allow students to return and then test them, we will be in a situation where we are having to send some students home if they have been in contact with someone who produces a positive test result in school. I do not want to be in a position where I am sending groups of children home again having just started. **Therefore, to minimize this risk as much as possible, students who have now consented to having the tests will be invited in prior to returning in order to have their first test. The first test will give us as much assurance as possible that students are virus free.**

This is the plan. I am sorry that it is longwinded, but I need to make sure that I am clear so that you are in no doubt about the plan:

Friday 5th March – Year 10 and Year 11 students will be given time slots and they will come to school, take the test and return home. Results come through within an hour so students will know, almost immediately, that they are fine to return to school. If they receive a positive test result, we will be in touch with you with next steps. One of those steps is that we have to arrange for you to receive a home test kit for a full PCR Covid test.

Monday 8th March – Year 11 students will return to school on this day as long as they have had a negative test result. From this point, Year 11 have made a full return to school and they will receive two further tests in school. We will manage this by having extended tutor times so that we can test everyone in the year group.

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Ella Brett **Headteacher**

Tottenham High School, Laurel Street, Tottenham, Bury. BL8 3LY

Tel: 01204 88 2327 **Email:** information@tottenham.shaw-education.org.uk **Online:** tottenham.bury.sch.uk

Monday 8th March – Year 9 students will be given time slots and they will come to school, take the test and return home. Due to the fact that the local school nursing team are apparently carrying out Year 9 injections offsite on Tuesday and Wednesday, Year 9 will return to school on Thursday 11th March, as long as their test result is negative.

Tuesday 9th March – Year 10 will return to school on this day as long as they have had a negative test result. From this point, Year 10 have made a full return to school and they will receive two further tests in school.

Tuesday 9th March – Year 7 will be given time slots and they will come to school, take the test and return home.

Wednesday 10th March Year 7 return to school on this day as long as they have had a negative test result. From this point, as mentioned above, we will manage the further tests.

Thursday 11th March – Year 9 students will make a full return to school on this day as long as they have had a negative test result.

Thursday 11th March – Year 8 students will be given time slots and they will come to school, take the test and leave.

Friday 12th March – Year 8 students return to school on this day as long as they have had a negative test result. This means that, by Friday 12th March, all students have been tested at least once and all students are back in full time on site education.

Here is a visual plan giving the same information:

Friday 5 th March	Monday 8 th March	Tuesday 9 th March	Wednesday 10 th March	Thursday 11 th March	Friday 12 th March
		Y7 test 1 and leave	Y7 return to school	Y7 in school	Y7 in school
				Y8 test 1 and leave	Y8 return to school
	Y9 test 1 and leave			Y9 return to school	Y9 in school
Y10 test 1 and leave		Y10 return to school	Y10 in school	Y10 in school	Y10 in school
Y11 test 1 and leave	Y11 return to school	Y11 in school	Y11 in school	Y11 in school	Y11 in school

The tests have to be repeated within a set amount of days and this, in part, is what is dictating the return of students. It is not possible to test at weekends and so this limits the time we have to conduct three tests in a two week period.

This is as much information as I can give you for now. However, the next information you will receive will be about the arrangements for visiting school for a test. We hope to be able to give each student a time slot and we will give clear instructions as to what they will need to do. I do not want to put too much information in this letter as it is complex enough already! When students visit for a test, they do not need to be in school uniform. Please, await a communication with a time slot for the first test on the day that has been designated in the information above.

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I realise that the visit and test idea means that students will have to make their way to school and back for a test. It will be difficult to be very flexible on timings due to the sheer number of students that need to be tested – on Friday 5th March, for example, we could see in excess of 300 students arriving for testing slots. We will do our very best to inform you of your child's testing slot as soon as possible.

Hopefully, this gives you an idea of the dates for testing and the dates for the return of students so that you can begin to plan.

In the meantime, next week we will be giving further support to students so that they know how to take the test and what to expect. This will be during their online learning.

In addition, in other news... you will be receiving further information from us in relation to the following:

- Free screen Friday next week – this will be for all students
- Clear information, guidance and reminders about expectations for all students on their return to onsite education from 8th March
- Some appointments for certain Year 11 students and their parents to meet/speak with Senior Leaders next week
- Further information for all Year 11 students in relation to the assessment processes for this year, both internal school assessments and the national process for the awarding of GCSE grades.

Please, do not worry about any of the above. We will be in touch with further information at the start of next week. On that note, it is important to acknowledge the very difficult time that Year 11 have faced this academic year. Please, rest assured that we will continue to do all we can to support Year 11 students – on that note, I must thank my colleagues and, of course, especially Mrs McCool for doing all they can to alleviate any worries for these students.

Thank you for your support and your understanding at this difficult time. We are so pleased to be able to have students back in school. The first couple of weeks will be different, due to the testing that needs to take place, but we will try and ensure that school is as normal as we can possibly make it for our youngsters.

With very best wishes,



Ella Brett
Headteacher