

3 March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are delighted to confirm our plans for a phased return of all students, and we are really looking forward to welcoming everyone back to school for face-to-face education. We remain committed to implementing the guidance provided by the Department of Education to ensure that school is as safe as it can be for our staff and students.

This letter will outline how students will return to school and confirm the arrangements for the school day that we have already established in the Autumn Term.

1 Year 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 arrangements for the phased return to school

To ensure that students can return to school safely for face-to-face education, we are required to test students using a Lateral Flow Testing device. This will provide a way of identifying any students who may be COVID-19 positive and asymptomatic and will enable us to restrict the spread of the virus in the school community.

Please note: If your son/daughter is displaying symptoms, then please do not send them to school. See section 6 below for more advice regarding Covid-19 symptoms and self-isolation.

We will test all students, **for whom we have received consent** for the COVID-19 lateral flow test, in Year 11, 10, 9, 8 and 7 on the day their year group returns to school for face-to-face lessons. Students will arrive in school on their **allocated year group day** which will operate using the normal timings of the day. I can confirm that the school buses will be running as usual with effect from 8 March.

The tests will be administered by the students themselves under close supervision by trained school staff, in our testing centre currently located in the Dance Studio. More details in relation to lateral flow testing can be found [here](#).

Careful planning has taken place to ensure that all students can be tested twice within the Government recommended 3-5 days. Students will then be re-tested a third time by Wednesday 24 March. Once the 3 tests have been completed in school, **all students who have consent** will be issued with Home Testing kits to be completed under the supervision of the parent or carer and results will be submitted to the school. We will provide further details of this process nearer the time.

Parents will be contacted by school if their child has tested positive as soon as the result is available and they will then need to ensure their child self-isolates for 10 days from the day after the test was taken.

Students will follow their normal staggered timetable, and year group “bubbles” will be maintained as in the Autumn Term. Students should follow their Go4Schools timetable and Table 2 overleaf is a reminder of the school day timings for each year group. On arrival in school students should gather in their year group areas before being lined up for a staggered entry into the school building.

2 Sixth Form arrangements for the phased return to school

Due to the challenge presented by the numbers of students and the requirement to retest all students within 3-5 days, we will require all Sixth Form students to complete their first lateral flow test **before** the rest of the school. Sixth Form students need to attend school on Friday 5 March between 9.00 - 11.00am and will not stay in school for lessons unless they have a confirmed arrangement with Ms Richards.

All Sixth Form lessons for students who have tested negative, will begin on Monday 8 March.

Table 1 - Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 phased return to school

Years 12 & 13	Year 11	Year 10	Year 9	Year 8	Year 7
Friday 5 March	Monday 8 March	Tuesday 9 March	Wednesday 10 March	Thursday 11 March	Friday 12 March

Table 2 – Confirmation of school day arrangements

	Start of the school day	Break	Lunch	Tutor Time	End of the school day
Year 7	08.50	10.00-10.15	11.15-11.45	14.35-15.10	15.00
Year 8	08.50	10.15-10.30	11.45-12.15	14.35-15.10	15.05
Year 9	08.50	11.00-11.15	13.15-13.45	14.35-15.10	15.10
Year 10	08.50	10.45-11.00	12.45-13.15	14.35-15.10	15.05
Year 11	08.50	10.30-10.45	12.15-12.45	14.35-15.10	15.00
Year 12/13	08.50	10.30-10.45	12.15-12.45	14.35-15.10	15.00

3 Vulnerable students and children of critical worker groups

All vulnerable students and children of critical workers will continue to come into school from Monday 8 March. They will still receive face to face teaching from specialist subject staff and will follow a modified timetable until their year group return to school, when they will join them and return to their normal timetable.

4 Face Coverings amendment (until Easter in the first instance)

You may have seen that the government have updated its guidance on the use of face coverings/masks inside classrooms. In the government guidance, it states 'we also recommend that face coverings should be worn in classrooms for a limited time'. The guidance also states that 'No pupil should be denied education on the grounds that they are not wearing a face covering'. At John Willmott, we recommend that face coverings are worn by students and teachers wherever possible. We will continue to guide students about the effective use of face coverings. However, we will not penalise or sanction a student who is not able to wear a face covering.

The use of face coverings in recommended circumstances is one element of the system of controls and will be implemented in line with other guidance and measures such as increased ventilation for example.

We recommend that face coverings should also be worn by adults and students when moving around the school site ("Moving means masks") e.g., along corridors. In addition, we recommend students wear face coverings in the dining room when not eating or drinking.

Face coverings are still required at all times on public transport and designated school buses for all students. It is really important that face coverings are worn correctly, and we advise students to follow this guidance:

- Not touching the front of their face.
- Wash or sanitise their hands regularly.
- Placing reusable face coverings in a clear plastic bag to keep them clean when not worn in lessons.
- If a face mask becomes damp, it should not be worn, and the face covering should be replaced carefully. We recommend that students bring a spare face covering for this purpose.
- It is expected when using disposable masks, it is the parent/carers responsibility to ensure that their child has enough face masks/coverings for the journeys to and from school on public transport if needed as well as for use in school every day.
- Disposable masks should be placed in a bin with a lid.

Some students may be exempt from wearing face coverings; any requirement to wear a face covering does not apply to children and young people who:

- have a disability that means they cannot wear a face covering.
- would find wearing a face covering severely distressing.
- are with someone who relies on lip reading to communicate.

Please contact your child's Head of Year if you feel your child is exempt and we do not already know.

5 Hygiene Reminders

- Students will need to continue to wash their hands thoroughly and use hand sanitiser more often than usual. Hand sanitisers are available in every classroom and at other key locations around the school site. We also recommend students have a personal supply of hand sanitiser in their school bag.
- Good respiratory hygiene is essential, and students should continue to follow the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach. Tissues are available in every classroom as well as pedal bins.
- Students will be expected to social distance (2m) where possible and especially when they are outside and not wearing face coverings.

6 Coronavirus (COVID-19), self-isolation and attendance

Although attendance to school is mandatory, students must not attend school if:

- they have one or more coronavirus symptoms.
- a member of their household (including someone in their support bubble) has coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms.
- they are required to quarantine having recently visited countries outside the common travel area.
- they have had a positive test.
- they have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive.

Students must not attend school and self-isolate for at least 10 days from the day after:

- the start of their symptoms.
- the test date if they did not have any symptoms but have had a positive test (Lateral flow or PCR).
- the day they had close contact with a person who has tested positive.

As always, all periods of absence should be reported to school **as soon as possible** with a clear reason for the absence to attendance@jws.bham.sch.uk.

It is particularly important that any COVID-19 related reasons for absence are communicated with school immediately as there may be implications for other close contacts of your child in school.

Further details on staying at home/self-isolation can be found [here](#).

The symptoms are:

- high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature).
- new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual).
- loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.

7 Remote Education

Whilst each year group is at home waiting for their first test, prior to their return to face-to-face lessons, remote education will continue for that year group following the remote learning timetable as published on the school website.

Whilst most students will be returning to school, there will be students who are shielding, who may need to self-isolate due to close-contact, who are presenting symptoms or may have had a positive test result. Therefore, the school will continue to provide work for those students who need to self-isolate at home.

8 Uniform

Students in Key Stage 3 and 4 are still expected to wear full school uniform as outlined on the school website and Sixth Form students will be expected to wear the full Sixth form dress code.

As the weather is still changeable, it is important that students wear an appropriate outside coat to and from school. Coats will also be necessary as all classrooms **will be ventilated** and students may need to wear their coat if outside temperatures are particularly cold.

John Willmott School PE kit should be worn on the day that students have PE lessons. The full uniform list is available on the school website. [Click here](#) to access it. The teacher may give permission for face coverings to be removed for the duration of the PE lesson.

We thank you in advance for your support and recognise that most of our students come to school every day looking smart and proud to wear our school uniform. However, we also request that if you feel there will be a specific barrier to meeting the uniform policy, or if you are facing particular hardship, you should contact your child's Head of Year at the earliest opportunity to discuss the support that we can provide.

9 Parent and carer access to the school site

In accordance with the Government guidance, we still need to carefully control visitors to the school site. Whilst we continue to highly value the relationship and communication between home and school, parents or carers must only come into reception or onto the school site with prior agreement or for a prearranged appointment.

We would like to thank you for taking the time to read the information contained in this letter and thank you for your continued support.

Your support at home throughout this latest lockdown has ensured that the remote education that our staff have worked so hard to provide has been extremely successful and this has ensured our students are now ready to return to face-to-face education. If your child is feeling anxious or scared about coming back to school, Childline have provided an excellent guide with practical steps that can be taken at home in preparation for their return [here](#).

In the meantime, if you have any further queries that are not specifically addressed in this letter or in the information provided on the government website, please contact the school through enquiry@jws.bham.sch.uk.

Yours faithfully

Mrs T Peters
Headteacher