



23 February 2021

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Dear Parent/Carer

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Firstly, I hope you and your families had an enjoyable and restful half term holiday.

The Prime Minister announced yesterday (Monday 22 February) that the Government has set out its plan for the return of all students to school. As I am sure you will appreciate, there is a vast amount of detail involved in the plans for school return and we are currently reviewing guidance issued by the Government and the Department for Education.

All schools will return to face-to-face education from Monday 8 March. All secondary school students will take coronavirus (COVID-19) tests as they return to the classroom from Monday 8 March. Testing is voluntary; however, we would encourage everyone to participate in the asymptomatic testing programme to help break transmission links by identifying those who may be carrying the virus unknowingly. Schools have discretion on how to phase the return of their students over the week beginning 8 March to allow them to be tested on return, prioritising Year groups 10 to 13 (Key stage 4 and 5).

After an initial programme of 3 tests in school, students will be provided with two rapid tests to use each week at home. It is important that students are initially supervised whilst swabbing to make sure they are doing it correctly. This is why testing will initially take place on-site. Secondary schools should offer students 3 tests on-site, 3 to 5 days apart (min 3 days), upon their return. Testing on-site initially is a condition of being able to transition pupils and students to test at home.

We have been given the flexibility to consider how best to deliver testing on a phased basis from Monday 8 March. **Students should return to face-to-face education following their first negative test result.** Students not undergoing testing should attend school in line with our phased return arrangements.

Our hope is that we can invite all students to school for their initial LFT (lateral flow test) on a rota basis during week commencing 1 March 2021. We will wait for updates about whether this is possible and I will write to you with further details.

The most important aspect now is collating parental consent.

Year 7 – Year 11 LFT parental consent

Following my letter of 1 January 2021, if you have not already done so please use this link [here](#) to provide consent for your child in Year 7 – Year 11 to undertake lateral flow testing at school in accordance with Government and Department for Education guidelines.

Sixth Form student LFT consent

Following my letter of 1 January 2021, if you have not already done so please use this link [here](#). Students over the age of 16 can give consent themselves following discussion with parents/carers.

We very much look forward to welcoming all students to return to Ridgeway Academy. In the meantime, students should continue working hard on their remote learning through google classroom. Thank you for your continued support as we follow the guidance and prepare thoroughly; it is much appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Mitcherson
Headteacher