



KING EDWARD VI HIGH SCHOOL

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HEADTEACHER: Mr J Christey

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Dear Parent/Guardian

Following the Prime Minister's announcement last night, I am sure that many of you will have mixed feelings around the opening of schools to pupils from Monday 8th March 2021. However, it was not made clear that secondary schools may need to implement a phased return for pupils returning to school. Adopting a phased return will allow us time to carry out the lateral flow tests which need to be offered before pupils can return to the classrooms.

Staff and pupils have done an amazing job with the on-line learning and everyone now wants to see pupils back in school and learning with their teachers and friends as soon as possible.

Moving forward, we will retain many of the procedures from the previous lockdown. Below is a reminder of the things that we have in place that will remain to ensure that risks are kept to a minimum.

The staggered start occurs naturally as some pupils arrive on school buses and others walk. I would ask that pupils enter the school grounds no earlier than 8.30 am and go straight to their form rooms. I would also like you to speak to your child about not meeting people outside the gates or at the shops.

Pupils will remain in their year group bubbles. Within that bubble pupils do not have to socially distance themselves. However, between the bubbles social distancing should be maintained wherever possible. Pupils can sit next to each other in class, but again where possible, pupils will be sat front facing. All pupils will continue to receive a broad curriculum. The practical subjects have reviewed how they deliver their lessons so that pupils do not have to share equipment.

To ensure that the year groups are kept socially distant from each other, we changed the timetable so that all lessons are doubles. The reason for this is so that pupils will not have to move around the building as frequently. This will reduce the opportunities of year groups coming into contact with each other. Break and lunchtimes will continue to be staggered so that Key Stage 3 will be at a different time than Key Stage 4. All year groups will continue to use specific areas of the school during break and lunchtimes. These areas may change if the weather is poor. Pupils will not be given the opportunity to go to all areas of the school during these times and they must follow these guidelines.

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The school caterers provide food that pupils can just pick-up and go. Sandwiches, pasta pots, etc., are examples of the types of food available.

Finishing times will continue to be staggered in order for different year groups to leave at slightly different times. These are at five minute intervals, which gives enough time for pupils to leave in their bubbles.

If your child catches the school bus, mini bus or public transport the guidance is the same. Pupils will be expected to sanitise their hands before they get on to the bus and as they leave. Facemasks are required to be worn on the bus.

All pupils will be expected to attend school in full school uniform. On the day that a pupil has their core PE lesson, we will allow them to come to school wearing their PE kit. This should follow the school uniform policy. We also allow pupils to wear the school PE hoody under their blazer due to the fact that more windows and doors will be open for ventilation. Please ensure it is only the school hoody that is worn.

To reduce risk and ensure that everyone stays safe, all classrooms will be equipped with hand-sanitiser, tissues, anti-bac wipes, and bins with lids on. Good hand hygiene as well as catch it, bin it, kill it, will ensure that everyone is safe. A cleaner is on site throughout the day to clean any high-risk areas.

The return of pupils and testing can be phased during the first week to manage the number of pupils passing through the test site at any one time. These will be carried out in the existing school testing facilities. Three tests will be offered, three to five days apart. Schools have the flexibility to consider how best to deliver testing on a phased basis from 8th March, depending on our circumstances and local arrangements, but schools will prioritise vulnerable children, children of critical workers, and year groups 10 to 13. After the initial programme of three tests in school, pupils will be provided with two rapid tests to use each week at home.

Pupils can return to face-to-face education following their first negative test result. Pupils not undergoing testing should attend school in line with the phased return arrangements. Schools will have discretion on how to test students over that week as they return to the classroom.

Testing is voluntary. If consent is provided, pupils will be asked to self-swab at the on-site testing area and will be informed of their results within thirty minutes. Pupils will be allocated a time for their lateral flow test and should report to the Sports Hall on their day of testing. Pupils must have the consent form signed by their parents or guardians in order for them to be allowed to have the lateral flow test.

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Please click on the link below for further information about the lateral flow tests and to inform us whether you would like your child to have the lateral flow test. The closing date is **Friday 26th February 2021 at 12.00 pm**. Once the numbers of pupils that are participating in the lateral flow tests are known, then the school will make the decision in terms of how **pupils will be phased back into school from the 8th March**.

<https://forms.gle/PmuPnaUzLKC9zAkh8>

Another additional and temporary difference is that staff and pupils in secondary schools are expected to wear face coverings in all areas, including classrooms, where social distancing cannot be maintained. Therefore, pupils should bring their own face covering unless medically exempt. Face coverings are not expected to be worn when outside.

As previously explained, the vast majority of pupils follow these procedures and I believe the school is as secure as it can be under the current guidelines. I cannot stress enough the importance of following the Government's guidance in order to keep our school community safe and to keep disruption to pupils' learning to a minimum. I must therefore, reiterate the need for parents to keep their child at home and not send them into school if they have any of the following Covid-19 symptoms, and seek an immediate test for COVID-19:

- a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or three or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- a 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

Could I please remind you that the guidance states that the whole household should self-isolate when a family member displays symptoms, until a negative result is received.

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My aim is to reassure you that the safety of both the pupils and staff is the school's main priority, whilst still delivering the best education that we can. Many points contained in this letter are reminders of the procedures that have worked so well in the past, as well as a few additional changes moving forwards.

Hopefully, we can all look forward to the easing of these restrictions over the next few months and the eventual return to some form of normality.

Yours sincerely

Mr J Christey
Headteacher

