

# Hayle Academy

24 February 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

We have continued to work at pace on our plans for reopening, and I am contacting you to update you further on the arrangements for students to return to school, beginning from Monday 8th March. As parents will know, schools are re-opening to all students, with their phased return during that week being supported by a programme of 'lateral flow testing'. As is often the case with such programmes, following the Prime Minister's announcement on Monday, information has continued to come out to schools, and we are in communication with the DfE and Public Health to confirm the arrangements for testing and return. Our aim is to provide a programme that allows all students to return confidently to their classrooms with a set of clear routines that will continue to minimise any risk of infection within our school and wider community.

Whilst many of our Covid 19 protection measures will be familiar to families, some are new and more information about these is below. As in September, key aspects of minimising the risk of infection are "hands-face-space". Hand hygiene: regular, thorough washing and hand sanitiser are crucial to reducing the risk of transmission and will continue to be strongly emphasised throughout the school day. Social distancing (staying apart from other students and staff) is also fundamental and we know that this is very difficult in a school setting. Wherever possible, students will continue to be asked to remain socially distant from their peers. Social distancing from staff is particularly important as staff move between our 'bubbles'. There is more information about the changes to the requirements for face coverings below. In addition to these measures, we have enhanced cleaning, one way systems, a staggered lunch break and adaptations to classroom routines which will all contribute to reducing the risk of infection. It is vital that students return to school (for both their education and wellbeing) and we have prioritised their safety, welfare and support in our planning.

As there is a lot of information to share, I have divided this email into a series of sections to highlight some key aspects of our planning:

Testing programme. We will offer all students a series of in school Covid-19 tests. These are lateral flow tests which our students will self-administer, supervised by trained staff. The tests will identify any students who are infected but do not have symptoms and are therefore helpful in ensuring that we can re-open confidently with low risk of transmission and the potential disruption to learning this may cause. Students will only be tested if we have consent from parents to do so, and the first tests will be done before students return to school. We hope that that vast majority of students will take part in the testing programme. If you would like your child to do so, please confirm consent by using this link:

<https://forms.gle/TSqNBiZH6fkZoRhh8>

Once we have received your consent, parents will be contacted to confirm the time of your child's test. Please note that this is a new form and those parents who completed a consent form in December/January will need to complete this new form. We will confirm the programme of testing to you by the end of the day tomorrow, 25th February. Details about home testing will be shared later with parents. Public Health have asked schools to supervise these initial tests so that students become familiar with the process and are then able to continue to self-administer a weekly test at home. We know that the tests are slightly 'uncomfortable' however staff and students who have been tested already have coped very well and quickly become used to the

process. The test is a simple swab of the throat and nose which takes a few seconds to complete. We should be able to return results within an hour (a test takes at least 30 minutes to process). Any students who test positive will need to self-isolate with their household and more details will be provided if this happens. Once students have returned to school, parents must be available to collect their child as an urgent priority if they test positive or develop symptoms of possible Covid 19 infection during the school day.

Phased return to school: in order to support the series of lateral flow tests and ensure a safe return to classrooms, the return to school will be phased. Importantly, a phased return means that we have additional staff available to fully support students on their first days back and to help them to understand the new routines. As children return to classrooms, the remote learning provision for their year group will end. The final programme for re-opening to students will be shared with families by tomorrow, 25th February.

Supporting students to return confidently. We know that the vast majority of students are keen to get back to school. Remote learning can never fully replace the classroom environment nor the face to face contact and interaction with teachers and their classmates. On their first day back, the pastoral team, support staff, teachers and tutors will be focussed on supporting students to make a positive return: listening to their experiences in lockdown, understanding their learning and progress in detail, helping them to get to grips with the new routines and ensuring they have additional and individual support where needed. We will provide extended tutor time, remote assemblies and individual and small group work to provide additional support. We know that student wellbeing is fundamental to them being able to learn and progress. Parents who feel their child may need additional support and would like to discuss this before their children return should contact their Head of Key Stage, for Years 7 and 8, Mr Wyatt on [clive.wyatt@hayleacademy.net](mailto:clive.wyatt@hayleacademy.net); for Years 9-11, Mrs Parker on [emma.parker@hayleacademy.net](mailto:emma.parker@hayleacademy.net)

Face coverings. The Government has updated the school's guidance to include that staff and students should wear face coverings in classrooms as well as communal areas and corridors where it is not possible to stay 2m apart. Parents will understand that our classrooms cannot allow for 2m social distancing: if we did, we would only be able to fit around 8 students in each classroom and most of our classes have between 20 and 30 students. Therefore, when staff and students return to school, everyone will need to wear a face covering in communal areas, corridors and classrooms unless there is a genuine medical exemption e.g. a physical disability or illness, diagnosed mental health issue or the student is reliant on lip reading or facial expression for communication. Where there is an exemption, the school will provide the student with an exemption card. Please contact the Head of Key Stage, or our SENDCo, Mr Woodward, on [james.woodward@hayleacademy.net](mailto:james.woodward@hayleacademy.net) if you would like to discuss an exemption for your child. For both students and staff, we understand that wearing face masks will be a bit of a nuisance. The Government has committed to reviewing this guidance at Easter and we will keep parents and students updated with any changes. For now, parents can help us by ensuring that students have a face covering, and at least one spare, every day. It is likely that students will want to swap their face mask at least once during the school day when it gets damp. Hand sanitiser will be provided so that students can remove their face mask hygienically. Students will not wear their face masks during PE lessons and a sealed plastic bag to store used face masks in hygienically would also be very helpful.

Staff preparation and training. Our staff teams have a huge amount of work to do preparing for re-opening. This includes significant training, briefings on procedures and routines as well as preparing support programmes, classrooms, lessons and resources. In order to prepare for re-opening, the 'live' elements of our lessons will be suspended on Thursday 4th and Friday 5th March, except for a short morning tutor time and registration where further guidance on the return to school will be given. Teachers will set appropriate work for students to complete for their timetabled lessons on these days. Our 'live' online teaching will resume on Monday 8th March for those students not in school and whilst students are being tested and are gradually returning to

classrooms. We are very grateful to parents in supporting children to learn during the lockdown and would like to thank our families, in advance, for their continued partnership.

I hope that this information is useful to families and students and look forward to contacting you again tomorrow with further details. Parents with any questions about re-opening, the testing programme, the support available for their children, or the return to classrooms can contact their child's Key Stage lead for advice or email [enquiries@hayleacademy.net](mailto:enquiries@hayleacademy.net) and a member of our team will be happy to help.

We very much look forward to welcoming our students back to school.

Yours faithfully,

Simon Horner

Head of School

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