

# ASHLYNS SCHOOL



23 February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Following the Prime Minister's announcement last night, you will be aware that the plans for the full return of children to school have now been confirmed. This means that students will begin to return to face-to-face education from Monday 08 March 2021.

For secondary school children, their return will take place alongside voluntary 'mass, asymptomatic testing' and children will return to face to face education following their first negative test result. The first three tests will take place at school (3 to 5 days apart) after which, testing will take place at home. This testing is voluntary but strongly encouraged. We will provide more detail on how this testing model will operate in the coming days and weeks.

I am pleased that the government advice affords schools the flexibility of a phased return to manage the number of pupils passing through the test site at any one time. At Ashlyns, given that we need to be able to test some 1400 students and 200 staff, this phasing will be essential. Understandably, the Government's guidance encourages schools to prioritise vulnerable children, children of key workers and years groups 10-13. Therefore, please be aware that some level of remote learning will remain in place for some year groups during the course of the week beginning 08 March.

You may also be aware that in the first phase of school return, as a temporary measure, the wearing of face coverings is expected, in all areas, including classrooms where social distancing cannot be maintained (unless students are exempt.)

In line with advice from Public Health England, the rapid testing and extended use of face coverings will be implemented alongside the existing range of safety measures previously in place and it will be important that students and families continue to follow restrictions outside of school to minimise the risk of community transmission. We will, of course, also review and update our Risk Assessment in light of the revised guidance.

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A separate letter and consent form regarding asymptomatic testing, along with a timetable of testing and phased return arrangements for each year group will follow in due course. In the meantime, I would like to encourage all students to continue to engage fully with their remote learning and look forward to welcoming them back to school in the very near future.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shapland', written in a cursive style.

**James Shapland**  
**Headteacher**