



Sir Graham Balfour School

Member of Sir Graham Balfour Multi-Academy Trust

26th February 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope this letter finds you all safe and well. I suspect some of you (most of you?) will be thrilled at the prospect of school fully re-opening. We certainly are, and cannot wait to get back to 'normal'.

Consent for Covid-19 Lateral Flow Tests

I have this week sent under separate cover a letter seeking your permission for your child to receive, and be taught how to carry out Covid Lateral Flow Tests. Please do complete the consent form and send it back in with your child on their return. By catching any asymptomatic cases, it will give reassurance and hopefully minimise any further disruption to education.

Full re-opening of School

In order to keep us all as safe as possible, the Government has asked us to carry out simple Covid tests with all students on their return. For this reason, we are going to stagger their return so that we can carry out these tests safely throughout the week, and quickly identify and isolate any asymptomatic cases.

So:

- Years 13, 12 and 11 will come back to school on **Monday** the 8th March
- Year 10 will come back to school on **Tuesday** the 9th
- Year 9 will come back to school on **Wednesday** the 10th
- Year 8 will come back to school on **Thursday** the 11th
- Year 7 will come back to school on **Friday** the 12th

We are required to test each student for asymptomatic Covid-19 three times during the first two weeks back, so that they can learn how to do it for themselves. After this time, they will receive personal testing kits, which they will use from home. We will talk them through this when we get back, so please do not worry about this for now.

Buses will run as normal each day.

Until your child comes back to school during that week, they will continue with remote learning, as now.

As is normal, please do NOT send your child to school if they show any possible signs of Covid-19. Instead please arrange to get them tested at the testing sites and await the results before sending them back in to school.

Children of Key Workers who have been with us throughout this lockdown will stay in their current bubbles until their year group returns, at which point they will go back into their classes with everyone else. They should all revert to school uniform from 8th March.

The Covid-safety routines we had at school before Christmas will all stay the same. Students will remain in their class and year group bubbles; they will wear PE kit on PE days, and full uniform on all the other days. They will have the same break and lunch arrangements as before Christmas. They will (with the accepted exemptions) continue to wear face coverings at all times inside the building and will regularly use hand sanitiser throughout the day. Doors and windows will be kept open, so remind them, please, to bring a warm coat or jacket to wear in classrooms until it gets a bit warmer outside. The normal rules and requirements are still in place. Please help us by ensuring your child is in school on time, in full uniform (or PE kit). I need them to come prepared with books, equipment, pen, pencil and ruler. I need them to get their head in the game quickly, settling to working back in school with their teachers. We will be reminding them of our expectations and standards of behaviour and attitude. I am sure that they will quickly get back into the swing of things and pick up from where we left off in December.

They will stay in the same classrooms as they were in before Christmas, so there is nothing new to get used to there. I spoke with Mr Trenbirth yesterday about PE lessons, and I am pleased to say that we will be going back to team sports straight away, whenever lessons are outside.

We are really looking forward to everyone coming back and being with their friends again. We know how important that is for wellbeing. We are also really looking forward to seeing students in classrooms, face to face, rather than via a computer screen or email message. Teachers will be assessing students very quickly to see where they are up to, and what support they may need to get back on track. For some students, this will mean attending extra sessions and compulsory homework club, in order that they can catch up quickly with everyone else. I await confirmation of the support package from Government that schools will be offered, to help them catch up. I will send out more details once I have them.

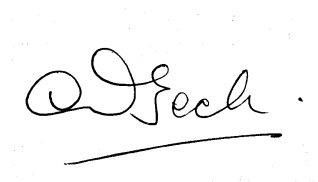
We understand that most of them will be very excited about coming back. Some of them will feel a bit anxious about it too. Both of these feelings are perfectly normal. We are here to look out for them all and help them settle back down very quickly.

Parents of Year 11 and 13 only – we are sifting through the rules for how their grades will be awarded. As we have continually said to our students, these grades will be based on **what they know and what they can do** in May, which is the time we will be required to assess them. Throughout May, we will be carrying out Hall-based tests to determine the range of their knowledge and skills. It is therefore absolutely vital that they keep up with the work set, developing their knowledge and skills in each subject based on what they have been taught up to now. Teachers will be here to help them, but expect your children to be pushed, so that they can show themselves at their very best when assessments are carried out. I will be sending out much more information next week about how your children's grades will be decided.

If you have any questions about any of the above, please do not hesitate to get in touch. If there are many questions, I will send out a FAQ sheet with answers.

I want to repeat my thanks to you all and my appreciation for the sterling job you have all done with your children during this (hopefully final) lockdown. I know of the responsibilities many of you have had to juggle whilst supporting your children with their remote learning. You have done a brilliant job. It's now time to relieve you of that responsibility and pass it back to us. Well done to you all, our honorary teachers of Sir Graham Balfour School.

My very best wishes to you and your families

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mrs Beck', with a horizontal line underneath it. The signature is enclosed in a faint, dotted rectangular border.

Mrs Beck
Headteacher