

# St Wilfrid's Catholic School

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Diocese of Arundel & Brighton and West Sussex County Council

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Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you are all keeping safe and well at this crucial time in tackling the transmission of the virus.

This letter is specifically to give you an overview of the arrangements for students from Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March. I will write separately to those in Year 11 and 13 regarding the information published yesterday in connection with the awarding of grades this summer.

You will undoubtedly be aware of the announcement by the Prime Minister earlier this week in which he stated that schools will re-open for all students from March 8<sup>th</sup>. We are delighted that we will be able to welcome back more students than those currently attending and we look forward to it with excitement.

However, as the Prime Minister has stated, we are required to offer Covid-19 tests to students upon their return and every 3-5 days until they have completed three tests. Having all students return is not a problem but the inclusion of this voluntary mass testing programme does present us with huge logistical issues. To that effect, next Friday (5<sup>th</sup>) will now be an inset day to ensure that we have everything in place to begin testing from Monday 8<sup>th</sup>; as such, no work will be set for that day and the school will be closed to students who are currently attending. Any Year 11 student who has an open day session on this day should still attend as per their appointment.

Therefore, as we are allowed to within the guidance, in order to offer be able to offer testing to those students who wish to participate, there will be an element of rotation/phasing of the return to a more normal way of working. The details of who should attend and on which days are set out below:

## **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March:**

Students in Years 9 and 11 should attend as normal and will have their timetabled lessons. Students in the VI Form who have timetabled lessons that day should also attend. Any other VI Form students who wish to be tested (please see below) should come to school between 11:30-12:45pm or between 1-3:00pm and following their test, they should leave the school site.

## **Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> March:**

Students in Year 7, 8 and 10 should attend as normal and will have their timetabled lessons

## **Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> March:**

All students to attend (only VI Form who have timetabled lessons)

## **Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> March:**

As per Monday 8<sup>th</sup> for Years 9, 11 and VI Form

## **Friday 12<sup>th</sup>:**

As per Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup>

## **Monday 15<sup>th</sup>:**

As per Monday 8<sup>th</sup>.

## **Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup>:**

As per Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup>.

### **Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup>:**

All students should attend. There will be no on-site testing for students from this date. Any student who has participated in the testing programme and has received all 3 tests, will be given a home testing kit to carry on with testing for the remainder of the term. The government will then make a further review at Easter regarding the need for any further testing.

Testing is completely voluntary, and not being part of the testing programme does not prevent your child from attending school. If you do wish for your child to be tested then you **must** give your consent by 9am Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March. Unfortunately, given the significant amount of organisation needed for this, any consents received after this deadline cannot be included in the testing programme. Please complete the online form using this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/KLFQVSE>

The testing process is carried out by using Lateral Flow Tests (LFT) which require individual students to take a swab sample themselves from the back of their throat and from inside their nose. Once the swabs have been taken then they are passed to a member of staff for processing. The results are normally confirmed within 30 minutes and at such time students will be asked to record their results online using their mobile phones.

There are obviously two outcomes to the test, positive and negative. If a student receives a positive result then they will be sent home and both they and their family members will be required to self-isolate for 10 days. Any students who have been identified as being in close contact with that person will also be sent home and they will be required to self-isolate for the same 10 day period (family members of close contacts are still able to go about their normal business). This is regardless of whether the "close contact" has already received a negative result from an LFT.

Any negative result from an LFT should not be seen as being free from any virus. In accordance with advice from Public Health England (PHE), it should be seen as potentially "not being positive enough" to be detected by the LFT, which are not as sensitive as the PCR tests which are used at local testing stations and require results to be confirmed by a laboratory. I am stating this so that no one is under the illusion of a false sense of security should they receive a negative result. We are still in a time of high numbers of cases and deaths and it is important that whatever the result of any test, we must all remain acutely focused on hand hygiene, being aware of symptoms, etc, to ensure that we all do our bit to minimise the risk of transmission.

Aside from the above, the only other observable expectation that students/staff will be required to implement is that, unless there is an exemption, all students and staff should now wear face masks in classrooms where social distancing cannot be maintained. If you have already registered an exemption for your child then you do not need to do so again. For those parents who may need to register for an exemption from Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March, please email you son/daughter's Form Tutor in the first instance.

As I have mentioned, we are all very excited at the prospect of welcoming your sons and daughters back into the school from 8<sup>th</sup> March. Although it clearly won't be "normal", it is a first step on the way and I am sure that with the high standards of maturity and application from students which we observed last term, we will move quickly to a period of normality and enjoy ending the term on a high.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely



Michael Ferry  
Headteacher