

Return to Whole College Opening March 2021



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Overall Expectation:

By Thursday 11 March *all* students should attend school every day and receive their normal amount of teaching time and curriculum delivered within the parameters of the government guidance and prioritising the health and safety of all.

The only exception to this is the advice for pupils who have been confirmed as clinically extremely vulnerable which is to shield and stay at home as much as possible until at least 31 March 2021. They are advised not to attend school while shielding. All 16 to 18-year olds with underlying health conditions which put them at higher risk of serious disease and mortality will be offered a vaccine in Priority Group 6 of the vaccination programme. At present, these children should continue to shield, and self-isolate if they have symptoms or are identified as a close contact of a positive case, even if they have been vaccinated.

This document is a guide to our opening systems and structures, taking into account current guidance and consultation. Guidance can change at short notice and feedback can identify or suggest improvements so there will be constant review over the coming weeks. The updated whole school risk assessment is also shared on the website. Our community has shown great resolve and flexibility in dealing with changing expectations of school operations and whilst some may be anxious about returning we are confident it is the right next step and with good communication we can overcome any concerns.

Please note the guidance is clear that all previous strategies used in the autumn term such as year group bubbles, one-way systems, break and lunches spent outdoors, ventilation of spaces, fixed seating plans and physical distancing remain vital aspects of the school environment. This means both students and staff are already very familiar with most of what they are returning to.

Other useful links:

ESCC Guidance: <https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/educationandlearning/schools/back-to-school/>

DfE Blog: <https://dfemedia.blog.gov.uk/2021/02/22/all-students-to-return-to-school-and-college-from-8-march-and-what-you-need-to-know/>

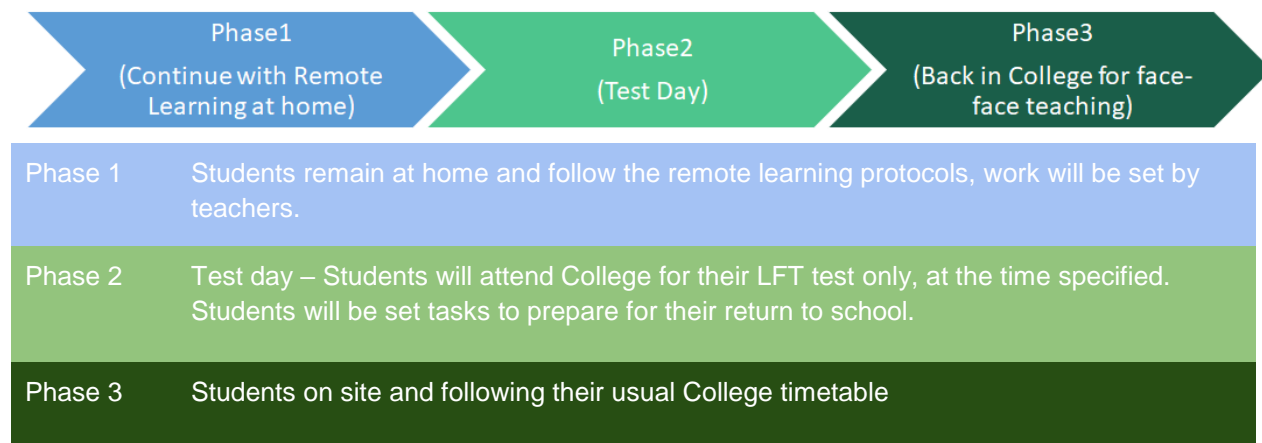
LFD Testing: Week Commencing 8 March:

There is a requirement that all students are offered the opportunity to have a lateral flow test before their year group return to school. This means the first week back will be staggered as we use our trained teams to run these tests. Students who attend key worker school will continue to be in school from Monday 8 March but will follow their timetable in their normal classrooms with their normal teachers. Once a year group returns they will have two more school-based tests spread over the next 10 days before a national programme of home testing starts. Our priority at the moment is to return all year groups as swiftly as possible. We will address home testing and help prepare students and parents for this once all have returned.

We have been carrying out tests in school since January for staff. The tests are designed to identify asymptomatic carriers - people who feel fine but may have COVID-19. Whilst initially a daunting idea our experience has been that the swabbing and testing procedure becomes very much a quick and straightforward process once you have been through it a few times.

The table below shows the days on which each year group is in for their test only day. We will be sending separate information for each year group that outlines the test procedure and details the specific time each student is expected for their test prior to starting back. We have a potential 1500 students to test across three days so it is really important that students who are to be tested keep to their time slot.

The supplies in schools are extremely limited at present to allow us to facilitate home-testing, so we have had to make decisions on availability based on declared and known health conditions, SEND and then distance from College and transport. We will be in touch with you directly if this applies to your child. We apologise if this means you would have preferred the home testing option but have not been offered it. If more supplies become available in the next week we will extend the offer but until then we can only work with what we have.



	Monday 8 March	Tuesday 9 March	Wednesday 10 March	Thursday 11 March
Yr 7				
Yr 8				
Yr 9				
Yr 10				
Yr 11				
Sixth Form				

All year groups will continue to be taught during the phased return. Home learning with live lessons will continue until their first test day.

On your test day, we do not want year groups worrying about catching up with missed lessons while they travel to and from their test so we will set a task that focuses on “getting ready for College” that can be done throughout the day.

The day after the test, students are back in for full school days which will begin with a Tutor Time at 8:40am. Permission for testing is not assumed and any student who is not to be tested will still follow the timeline and work set for their year group before returning.

Tests 2 and 3 take place within the school day. Students will leave their lesson at a designated time to do the test and then return. We envisage disruption to learning will be minimal. There are plenty of staff around to help and reassure anybody nervous about the process.

Positive Results: We have been through this pandemic long enough now to realise that there is no stigma attached to returning a positive test. Any student who is found to be positive or shows symptoms of COVID-19 will not return to school until their period of isolation is completed. Their family including any siblings and any identified close contacts also need to self-isolate under these circumstances. As with last term any student self-isolating, who feels well, is expected to work from home and can access their lessons through Firefly as provided by their teachers.

Decisions made to ensure the safety of the school environment:

College will be a safe environment although, any environment in society where people are circulating, transmission is possible and it is likely we will have cases to report and respond to. Outlined below are some of the key actions taken to ensure we are confident we can fully open safely. These will be reviewed regularly going forward.

- Revised risk assessment that reflects the latest government and scientific guidance.
- Lateral flow testing programme for staff and students to identify necessary self-isolation procedures for asymptomatic carriers.
- Students are now required to wear masks in classrooms as well as corridors within the buildings. This will be reviewed at Easter.
- Students will be in year group bubbles in terms of physical distancing.
- Provision to be based on 'Normal' school timetable to ensure the integrity and quality of educational offer.
- There is a one-way system in operation to ensure a smooth and controlled transition time between lessons. This means there should be no stopping and chatting in corridors or deliberate overtaking/slowing down. Staff will be on corridors to greet their class and supervise corridor space outside of their room during changeover.
- Classroom protocols for cleaning desks and sanitising hands will be overseen by staff but will be the responsibility of all on site. The opening of windows and doors will maintain a flow of fresh air through rooms.
- An enhanced whole school cleaning regime to be implemented as well as supporting the ability of staff/students to take personal responsibility for cleaning their work space if desired.
- Breaks and lunch with designated spaces to prevent year group bubble intermingling. In all but extreme weather conditions all students will be outside for both break and lunch accessing the building just for canteen or toilet facilities. We recommend all students bringing a coat to school.
- Adjusted behaviour and safeguarding policies to enable the school to ensure a safe and uninterrupted learning environment for all.

On-site Logistics and organisation:

Classroom setup: Classes will be normal size with all desks spaced and facing forwards where possible. Individual cleaning materials will be available for staff/students to sanitise their area should they wish. Students will sit in consistent designated seating plans to minimise the number of other students they are in close contact with and all staff teaching desks have a marked out 2m zone around them to maintain physical distancing.

Access to Lockers: students should access their lockers as soon as they arrive at school or en-route to their next lesson, they should not enter the building to access lockers during break and lunchtime. This is because it increases the mixing of bubbles.

PPE and Cleaning: Our risk assessment has reviewed our current practices against guidance. Students will be expected to wash hands or sanitise at regular points during the day. All classrooms and toilet areas have sanitiser equipment for students to use.

Masks: The guidance now states students should wear masks in the buildings including in their lessons. We have a small number of students who are already exempt from wearing a mask. Please get in touch if you wish your child to be added to this list by providing an explanation.

Lateral Flow testing: As described earlier in this document the school is following a national programme of regular testing for all members of our on-site community. This will initially involve tests carried out on site but will move to home testing for both staff and students after the first couple of weeks. More guidance and detail for home testing will be shared once we have fully reopened.

Break and Lunch: Year groups have designated outdoor space (and indoor space in case of extreme weather) for their break and lunch:

	Outside Social Space	Canteen Venue
Year 7	Music/Art Playground	The Quad
Year 8	Computing Playground	Canteen
Year 9	MUGA	SnackShack
Year 10	Playground	Hut Zero
Year 11	Canopy Area	SnackShack
Sixth Form	Sixth Form outside space	Cafe 6

Our canteen service will provide sandwiches and grab and go food but not sit-down meals. There will also be a break service. We recommend a warm coat is worn to school as social times will be outside.

Break and Lunch Supervision: As always, designated staff will be on duty at the start and end of the day and during breaks. If the weather is particularly bad we have inside social spaces the students can use, these will inevitably involve closer contact than outside and hence are not our first preference.

Toilet Facilities: A cleaning regime between lessons ensures these are free for use in social time. Students will have the ability to access sanitiser wipes to use themselves in the facilities as well as the increased cleaning regime throughout the day.

Subject Impacts - PE, Practicals, Food Tech: During the autumn term we managed to safely introduce practical lessons in most subjects that have them as part of their curriculum. We will continue this in March. Subject teachers or departments will inform parents in good time if there are any additional resources or expectations.

Assemblies: Assemblies are a really important aspect of our school community to ensure consistency of message, celebrate achievements and reinforce our ethos and culture. At present, all our assemblies take place virtually and are shared with students via Firefly.

Uniform and Equipment: Students are expected to be in standard school uniform and should have at least a couple of masks. Students must have their own full set of school stationery as we will not be able to lend out equipment. Students should also have their own pack of sanitiser wipes and gel dispenser for ease of use in the classroom.

Behaviour Expectations: The addendum to our behaviour policy is still in place to cover the heightened expectations around students abiding by our increased health and safety structures. We are confident the vast majority of students have a good understanding of the importance of following these structures and systems however we will take very seriously those who are unable to meet the standards we expect.

Extra-Curricular Offer: We are really proud that we have been able to maintain aspects of our extra-curricular offer throughout the year. We will be putting together an extra-curricular offer and project that this will begin from Monday 15 March. Details will be released over the coming days.

Responding to Actual or Suspected Cases of Covid-19 in School: We will continue to implement our protocols if a positive case is identified, either in or out of school. We have suitable spaces for the isolation of anybody who becomes unwell on site. If we have a suspected or confirmed case of Covid-19 we will be guided by the advice of Public Health England and will inform parents appropriately at the time. It is important parents also inform us if members of your household have a positive case.

School Risk Assessment: Our updated policy is published on the school website.

Lockdown Guidance: Everybody is reminded that on 8 March all other rules and regulations of this third lockdown remain in place. This means travel to and from school, socialising (before and after school) and behaviours during the week and at the weekend need to remain in line with the current rules for all members of our community. The pandemic is not over and the road towards full removal of restrictions remains a number of months away at a minimum.