

Phased Return to Face to Face Education - letter to parents and guardians

Dear parent / carer.

I wrote to you on Tuesday, 23 February, promising a complete overview of arrangements for your child(ren)'s safe return to face-to-face education. This letter contains that information. Please read the letter carefully and in full. There are specific actions that you will be asked to take in order to help the School support your child.

It is important to say at the outset that my colleagues and I are greatly relieved by the government's decision to re-open schools. We look forward to welcoming your children back into our classrooms.

The remainder of this letter covers five topics.

- Phased return to face-to-face education
- Lateral flow testing arrangements in school
- Home testing arrangements
- Face masks required in school
- Return to school routines

Parents of students in Year 11 should have received a separate letter last night concerning the government's announcement about GCSE grading.

Phased return to face-to-face education

Earlier this week, I explained that students would make a phased return to school, in line with government guidance to secondary schools in England. This return will start on Monday, 8 March and **all students will be back in full-time schooling by Friday, 12 March**. The main reason for this phased approach is so that students can access testing for Covid-19 prior to their return to classrooms. Providing these tests will require the school to arrange and administer up to 2,500 tests over just a few days.

Lateral flow testing

All students will be tested for Covid-19 using lateral flow device (LFD) tests, which test for Covid-19 in people who do not show symptoms. The School will administer three tests for every student at intervals of three to five days. The first of these tests will be administered during the week commencing Monday, 8 March. Students will return to classroom teaching the day **after** their respective year group has received its first test.

The School does not have the capacity to test all students on one day and it would not be safe for students to break year group bubbles when coming into school to receive tests. Please note that testing will be by appointment **only**. Students will be invited into school in tutor groups on the day

their year group is due to be tested. Students must **not** attend school at any other time without prior notice.

Students will administer their LFD test under the supervision of a trained colleague and will be asked to remain in school for 30 minutes to await the test result. Students whose test result is negative will then be sent home. The School will contact parents prior to sending home any child who tests positive for Covid-19.

Parents must **expressly** consent to these tests being performed in school by filling out this consent [form](#) by **4pm on Wednesday, 3 March**. Parents who do not return the form by this time will be assumed to withhold consent. In these cases, students can return to school for lessons along with their respective year group but must **not** attend school on the day that year group is undergoing testing. Students who attend school without an appointment will be sent home.

The following table provides an overview of the testing and return-to-school schedule for all students.

Date	First LFD test - by appointment	Students in lessons
Monday, 8 March	Year 11 Year 10	n/a
Tuesday, 9 March	Year 7	Year 11 Year 10
Wednesday, 10 March	Year 9	Year 11 Year 10 Year 7
Thursday, 11 March	Year 8	Year 11 Year 10 Year 9 Year 7
Friday, 12 March	n/a	All students

Home testing

Following this initial round of testing, students will be sent home with home testing kits which should be used twice every week to check for infection with Covid-19. These tests are easy to administer and give results in approximately 30 minutes. Ideally, students would take the test twice a week before school; however, we recommend the first time you take a test that you do it in the evening to give you time to go through the process. A short video explaining how these tests should be administered can be found [here](#). Once you have taken the test you will need to register the results via the NHS App which can be downloaded to your phone or tablet.

Anyone who tests positive for Covid-19, whether at home or in school, must continue to follow the national guidance and self isolate for 10 days.

Face masks

Government guidance includes increased measures designed to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in schools. Students and staff will need to wear face masks in **any** indoor areas where social distancing is not possible. This will include classrooms. The School will treat face masks as an item of school uniform and reserves the right to refuse entry to any student who does not come to school with an appropriate face mask.

Families who have difficulty affording a suitable face mask and whose child qualifies for pupil premium funding can request one be provided by emailing the school at office@chartereastdulwich.org using the subject line 'Face mask request'. A small number of students may have medical conditions that prevent them from wearing a face mask. If this applies to your child, please confirm this in writing by emailing office@chartereastdulwich.org.uk using the subject line "Request for face mask exemption". In the absence of a written request, the School may be forced to send your child home.

Other hygiene measures

The additional measures introduced last September to help keep children safe from infection while in school will remain in place and will receive added emphasis. Students will be expected to wash their hands thoroughly and often and to use hand sanitizer when entering and exiting school buildings. Students will be expected to maintain social distancing where possible, even when they are outdoors.

Most students took to these routines very well. My colleagues and I will continue to encourage the compliance of the handful of students who found compliance more challenging. Where necessary, we will use sanctions in order to preserve the health and wellbeing of students and staff. The School's Positive Discipline Policy was amended in preparation for our re-opening in September.

Resuming regular school routines

Students have been out of formal schooling for some time and will need support in order to reacquire positive learning habits. Key to this process is the rapid return to normal school routines. This means that students will be expected to return to school, on the date indicated above for their year group, in **full school uniform**, now including a face mask. We are conscious that shops will remain closed for the next two weeks. Parents who believe that uniform compliance will be challenging should also contact the School Office using the subject line "Uniform". Casual items of clothing such as hoodies or track suit bottoms will not be allowed in school once lessons resume. School uniform is **not** required for LFD testing.

Students should arrive at their designated school gate at their appointed time in order to maintain year group bubbles. I must ask parents to remind their child(ren) that socializing with children outside of their year group, even outside of school, puts them at greater risk of infection and is strongly discouraged.

As a reminder, the arrangements for the start and end of the school day are as follows:

Year group	School gate	Arrival	Departure
11	East Dulwich Grove	08:20	15:30
10		08:25	15:35
9	Jarvis Road	08:25	15:35
9		08:20	15:30
7		08:15	15:25

Remote education

Remote education, or online lessons, will cease on **the day your child(ren)'s year group is subject to testing**. The teachers and other staff needed to make remote education available will, unfortunately, also be required in order to secure a successful reopening. In addition to this, there will be no 'live' lessons on Monday, 8 March for **any** students, though students in Years 7 to 9 will be provided with pre-recorded and other learning tasks online.

The School will provide remote education to any groups of students who are forced to self-isolate in the future, eg. were there to be an outbreak of Covid-19 in a specific year group.

I apologise for the length of this letter. I am acutely conscious that for many parents, this period has involved more extensive, more onerous, even more stressful involvement in their children's education than they ever expected or were prepared for. I'm afraid that is likely to be true for some time to come, notwithstanding children's return to school. I am confident that, working together, our community can help our children to put this awful pandemic period firmly behind them.

Thank you for your ongoing support and kind regards.

Mr. A. Crossman
Headteacher

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