

3 March 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

Last week the Department for Education issued guidance for schools detailing the measures which must be taken in order for a safe and effective reopening of schools to take place from 8 March 2021. This letter will outline these arrangements and so while it is longer than we normally share, I hope you are reassured by the comprehensive details within it.

To allow for Covid-19 testing (see below) we will be operating a phased return to onsite provision with different groups returning at staggered times. The prioritisation of exam year groups is in line with government guidance, thereafter we have invited the youngest students back first.

Year group	13	12	11	10	9	8	7
First testing day	Friday 5 March	Monday 8 March	Friday 5 March	Monday 8 March	Thursday 11 March	Wednesday 10 March	Tuesday 9 March
Date of return to onsite provision	Monday 8 March	Tuesday 9 March	Monday 8 March	Tuesday 9 March	Thursday 11 March	Wednesday 10 March	Tuesday 9 March

Years 10, 11, 12 and 13

- Parents/Carers will be invited to book an appointment on the day before their child is expected to return to school for onsite provision, to carry out their lateral flow test. A separate communication will be sent regarding this. Please note that we are using our usual Parent/Carer booking system to give families flexibility to book a time convenient to yourselves on the testing date for your child's year group bubble. Maintaining the bubble is imperative.
- Students should enter the school site no more than 5 minutes before their appointment time and wear a face mask.
- Students in Years 12 and 13 should queue on their respective days at the entrance to the Pavilion / Fitness Suite observing the markings on the floor to ensure social distancing.
- Students in Years 10 and 11 should queue on their respective days at the external fire doors to the Sports Hall observing the markings on the floor to ensure social distancing.
- Students will conduct their test and must return home straight away, adhering to government guidelines.
- Results will be communicated via test and trace to the contact details provided on the consent form.
- If there is a positive result we will contact Parents/Carers immediately.
- Following their first negative test, students should attend school as normal on the following school day.
- For students in Years 11 and 13 testing will be held on Friday 5 March with a return to school on Monday 8 March.
- Students in Years 10 and 12 testing will be held on Monday 8 March with a return to school on Tuesday 9 March.
- If you have not given consent for your child to take part in the lateral flow testing, they should report to their usual period 1 lesson on the day that their year group is due to return to onsite provision.

Years 7, 8 and 9

- All students in these year groups will be invited to return to school at staggered times during the week beginning Monday 8 March. Please see the rota at the end of this letter for the date and time of your child's return.
- Students whose Parents/Carers have consented for tests should enter the site no more than 5 minutes prior to their allocated time and queue outside the external fire doors to the Sports Hall (wearing a face mask), adhering to the markings on the ground to remain socially distanced from one another. Testing for those students who have consented, and on-site lessons, will resume on the same day, there will not be a need for students to return home after their test.
- If your child catches a bus to school, they should join the first cohort for testing during period 1 and will return to lessons after their test result.
- Following their test students will be supervised for the 30 minutes it takes to obtain the result and, all being well, they should be able to return to lessons immediately afterwards.
- If you have not given consent for your child to take part in the lateral flow testing, they should report to their usual period 1 lesson on the day that their year group is due to return to onsite provision.

All Years

- Remote learning will continue to be provided up until the day that your child is due to return to school.
- As we have been conducting regular tests with the keyworker and vulnerable students, these students therefore should go to their normal lessons from period 1 onwards each day next week (not their lockdown rooms). These students will attend subsequent testing with their tutor group at the allocated times.
- Please be reminded that Year 8 Parent Consultations will be held on Wednesday 10 March and therefore school will close early to facilitate this. Year 7 Parent Consultations will be held on Thursday 25 March and the same arrangements will apply. The timing of the consultations was set at the beginning of the academic year and we could not foresee the arrangements for testing that we now need to accommodate. We apologise for the disruption to your child's learning on this date however we are grateful for your support in this matter and the testing process that is intended to keep us all safer.

Year group	Period 4 ends	Lunch available
7	12:55	12:55
8 & 10	13:10	13:10
9 & 11	13:10	13:20
12 & 13	13:10	13:20

- Buses will arrive at 13:10 and depart at 13:30.

Testing in schools

- We will continue to follow guidance by testing students a total of three times over the course of the next few weeks, as a means to protect our community. Testing students and staff helps to identify asymptomatic cases and therefore helps to reduce the spread of Covid-19 within our school community. Students should not come to school if they or a family member are displaying symptoms.
- Students will line up prior to entering the testing area where they will register for their tests at the desks.
- The test will be overseen by a trained testing assistant who will ensure that students feel comfortable and are able to carry out the test properly, instructions will be available for them to look at and advice will be given by those overseeing the process.
- Following three tests taken at school, students will be provided with home test kits. We will send out more information in relation to this in due course.

Attendance and punctuality

- The Government have directed that it is mandatory for all students to attend school from Monday 8 March unless instructed by their school to remain at home to facilitate a staggered start.
- If your child is in receipt of a letter stating that they are Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) and we are not yet aware, please contact your child's Head of Year.
- When students return for onsite provision, they are expected to arrive on site no earlier than 8.30 am (unless they are in Year 7 and attending Breakfast Club) and no later than 8.40 am in order to reach their first lesson in time for 8.45 am.

Preventative Measures

Students will be familiar with the preventative measures we have been taking since September to ensure our community is safe from the risks of Covid-19. We would welcome you reminding them of the importance of following these measures.

Key aspects of our risk-assessment, to ensure that Longsands is as safe as possible for our whole school community, are as follows:

- Students will continue to follow a full curriculum but will be separated into year group bubbles to mitigate the risk of transmission;
- Years 7 – 9 will receive most of their lessons in zoned areas as before, Years 10-13 will move around the site – following the one-way system – in order to access specialist classrooms;
- Hygiene routines will be followed throughout the day, including sanitizing of hands on entering and leaving each lesson and prior to purchasing food from the canteen;
- Access to the school canteen, and indoor/outside social areas will be allocated to individual bubbles;
- Ventilation will play a role in all areas of school life, importantly in lessons, orchestrated by individual teachers. As windows and doors will be open your child may wish to wear layers under their uniform and will be permitted to wear a coat indoors whilst we experience colder temperatures.

Wearing of face masks

- As was the case in the autumn term, students, staff and visitors are expected to wear face masks when in all communal spaces inside school.
- Students may remove their masks to eat and drink within inside social areas.
- The wearing of face masks remains an expectation for travel on school buses and for those students using public transport to travel to school.
- As stated in our recent communications, government guidance now states that students and staff should wear a face mask in all circumstances where 2 metre social distancing cannot be observed, this includes within classrooms.
- It is our expectation that students will follow this guidance unless they are medically exempt from wearing a face mask. A student will be offered a badge to wear if they are medically exempt from wearing a face mask to prevent them from being challenged throughout the school day.
- In the light of this revised guidance, we would recommend that all students bring at least one spare mask with them to school and a plastic bag, which can be sealed, to store masks when they are in use but not being worn. Please note that no other forms of face coverings are permitted, they should be in the form of a face mask.
- By students wearing face masks, we are able to reduce the risk of transmission of Covid-19 within the school community.

Expectations if your child or another family member has symptoms of Covid-19

- Please ensure that your child remains at home if they, or a family member has one of the three identified symptoms of coronavirus. These are a loss of taste and smell, a fever and a new continuous cough.
- A PCR test must be booked via the NHS website and the result communicated to school. Home test kits that will be made available are for use when a student is asymptomatic and should not be used if they have symptoms. In the event of a positive test, the family should isolate for 10 days from the first day of symptoms.

Extra-curricular activities

Breakfast club and homework club will continue for Year 7 students only. Other extra-curricular activities will also begin, and departments will send out further information when this is available. For the moment these will continue to be in year group bubbles.

Preparing students for returning to school

Given the amount of time that most students have been learning remotely, it would be really helpful if you could support them at home for preparing to return to school in the following ways:

- **Wellbeing:** Although we expect that most of the students are already very keen to return to school, we also know that it may create some anxiety for some after such a long time out of the routine of school. We will plan activities over the coming weeks to support with this transition and reintegration back into school routines. If you have any specific concerns about your child/ren, please contact their Head of Year.
- **Uniform and Equipment:** Please ensure that your child returns to school in full uniform, including smart, polishable, black shoes. They should also ensure that they have the correct PE kit for their lessons, for the majority of students this will be their usual PE kit with trainers. The only additions are that Year 7 and Year 9 boys will need football boots and shin pads. Year 7 girls and Year 8 boys will just need shin pads in addition to their usual trainers. In the coming weeks, we will have a renewed focus on uniform standards so please ensure your child is properly and fully equipped. Students should ensure they have all the necessary equipment needed for all their lessons.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the incredible support you have provided, in difficult circumstances, over the past couple of months. The support you have offered your child/ren in fulfilling their remote learning has been remarkable and we are very much looking forward to welcoming back all of our students again. If you should have any questions about your child's return to school, please do email us via enquiries@astrea-longsands.org

Wishing you and your family well.

Yours sincerely



Mr N D Owen
Principal

Schedule for first tests

Date	Year/Tutor group	Venue	Time
Friday 5 March	Year 13	Fitness Suite	Booking system
Friday 5 March	Year 11	Sports Hall	Booking system
Monday 8 March	Year 12	Fitness Suite	Booking system
Monday 8 March	Year 10	Sports Hall	Booking system
Tuesday 9 March	7AJF + bus students	Sports Hall	08:45
Tuesday 9 March	7ERM	Sports Hall	09:05
Tuesday 9 March	7MLH	Sports Hall	09:25
Tuesday 9 March	7AJR	Sports Hall	09:45
Tuesday 9 March	7EAT	Sports Hall	10:05
Tuesday 9 March	7RBB	Sports Hall	10:25
Tuesday 9 March	7CMK	Sports Hall	11:10
Tuesday 9 March	7DVK	Sports Hall	11:25
Tuesday 9 March	7EMS	Sports Hall	11:40
Tuesday 9 March	7RJE	Sports Hall	11:55
Wednesday 10 March	8DPH + bus students	Sports Hall	08:45
Wednesday 10 March	8HJL	Sports Hall	09:05
Wednesday 10 March	8RLT	Sports Hall	09:25
Wednesday 10 March	8CSO	Sports Hall	09:45
Wednesday 10 March	8NJD	Sports Hall	10:05
Wednesday 10 March	8SXH	Sports Hall	10:25
Wednesday 10 March	8GXG	Sports Hall	11:10
Wednesday 10 March	8JAB	Sports Hall	11:25
Wednesday 10 March	8JVL	Sports Hall	11:40
Wednesday 10 March	8SSH	Sports Hall	11:55
Thursday 11 March	9GAH + bus students	Sports Hall	08:45
Thursday 11 March	9JJB	Sports Hall	09:05
Thursday 11 March	9NJS	Sports Hall	09:25
Thursday 11 March	9CLG	Sports Hall	09:45
Thursday 11 March	9KJD	Sports Hall	10:05
Thursday 11 March	9NDZ	Sports Hall	10:25
Thursday 11 March	9CKK	Sports Hall	11:10
Thursday 11 March	9IMB	Sports Hall	11:25
Thursday 11 March	9JSH	Sports Hall	11:40
Thursday 11 March	9MTL	Sports Hall	11:55

Schedule for subsequent tests

Two further tests will be carried out during the normal school day on the following dates:

Year Group	Test 2	Test 3
7	12 th March	17 th March
8	15 th March	18 th March
9	16 th March	19 th March
10	11 th March	15 th March
11	9 th March	12 th March
12	12 th March	16 th March
13	10 th March	15 th March