

Thursday 25th February 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

THE SWAN SCHOOL REOPENING - MARCH 2021

In light of the government's announcement on Monday 22nd February, I am pleased to confirm that The Swan School will be welcoming all students back to face to face education from **Tuesday 9th March 2021**. We are supportive of the government's decision to prioritise the reopening of schools as, despite the heroic efforts of everyone in our community, we know that being in school is the best place for children's learning as well as their physical and mental well-being.

Please find below a summary of the timeline for children returning to school and what we will be doing to ensure that students are able to have the very best possible experience. **We will also be sharing a video explanation and FAQs in the Parent Bulletin and you are invited to join the virtual Parent Forum on Tuesday 2nd March (5-6pm) to raise any further questions (link will be shared in the bulletin).**

Key dates for your diary:

- **Friday 5th March - Lateral Flow Test 1 - school closed for students**
- **Monday 8th March - Lateral Flow Test 2 - school closed for students**
- **Tuesday 9th March - Students return to school**
- Friday 12th March - Lateral Flow Test 3 - school open as normal; students withdrawn for tests.

Lateral Flow Testing

Upon return, students and staff in schools will be tested on a regular basis (twice a week) using lateral flow tests (LFTs). These are rapid response tests that will allow us to identify asymptomatic carriers of COVID-19 and therefore reduce the risk to our school community. Although voluntary, we would urge as many students as possible to participate in the testing programme as this will be an important way to help keep everyone safe. The first three LFTs will be carried out in school to ensure that students have enough practice conducting the swabs. After this children (with the support of families) will be asked to carry out and log the results of their tests at home - test kits will be distributed once the final 'in-school' test has been completed.

Students must not attend school if they have any of the symptoms of COVID-19, even to be tested.

Consent

It is essential that we have consent from all parents in order to carry out the lateral flow tests - your child will not be able to be tested if we have not received written consent from you. **Please ensure that you have completed [this consent form](#) by Wednesday 3rd March.**

- We will email you to confirm if we have already received your consent and you do not need to fill in the form; please complete the consent form if you do not hear from us.

- If you do not give consent, please complete the form and tick the option to say that consent is not given - this will save us administrative time chasing up your response.

In-School Testing

In order to minimise disruption to children's education, the three in-school LFTs will be carried out on the following dates:

- **Test 1 - Friday 5th March (AM)**
- **Test 2 - Monday 8th March (AM)**
- **Test 3 - Friday 12th March (all day)**

School will be closed for students on Friday 5th and Monday 8th March so that all students can be tested before they return to school. We believe this is the best way to manage the testing safely with the minimum disruption to face-to-face education. **There will be no on-site provision or distance learning set on these days.**

- On Friday 5th and Monday 8th March, students should only attend school at the time specified below for their testing slot. Students should return home as soon as their test has been completed.
 - **Bannister House (7B/8B) - 9.15am**
 - **Hawking House (7H/8H) - 10.00am**
 - **Berners-Lee House (7L/8L) - 11.00am**
 - **Yousefzai House (7Y/8Y) - 11.45am**

Test 3 (Friday 12th March) will be carried out as part of the normal school day with children being withdrawn from normal curriculum lessons to be tested. All children will attend school as normal on 12th March.

Home Testing

Home test kits will be distributed to students once they have completed their final 'in-school' test. We ask parents/carers to support their child in carrying out their test twice per week, 3-5 days apart. Testing on Sunday and Wednesday night is ideal. There are instructions inside each of the test kits about how to administer the test and record the results.

Student Matriculation

After a long period of absence from school and with our new building meaning that there are some changes to routines, we believe it is important to properly re-induct students back into school life. This is a great opportunity to re-lay the strong foundations of our school culture and give our students the very best possible chance of success.

On Tuesday 9th March and Wednesday 10th March, students will take part in a mini-Matriculation. This will include a range of activities, including a tour of the new school building, practising new routines, and reconnecting with one another.

Curriculum Lessons and Assessment

Curriculum Lessons will recommence on the afternoon of Wednesday 10th March. Assessments will take place on Wednesday 17th - Friday 19th March. We hope to get these marked and a simplified report issued by the end of term. These assessments are a valuable way to motivate students in their learning and for teachers to be able to assess how much students have learned and where the gaps are that will need to be addressed. They will also help us to identify students who may now be in need of additional support.

Keeping our School Safe

In order to reopen safely, we will be putting in place a broadly similar system of controls to those in place before the closure with the following significant differences:

- **Face coverings MUST be worn inside in all shared spaces where social distancing cannot be observed. This now includes classrooms during lessons. Please ensure that your child has a mask with them at all times.**
- Transitions between lessons - students will now start to move between classrooms for subject specific lessons. We will have a cleaning routine (practised during matriculation) to ensure that shared surfaces are thoroughly cleaned between groups.
- Extended Day - we hope to reintroduce the extended day after the Easter Holiday but will make a final decision about whether it is safe and practical to do so closer to the time.

You are also reminded of the following:

- Students must have a water bottle with them as part of their equipment - they are not permitted to use the water fountains except to fill up their bottles.
 - Windows will be kept open throughout the day to ensure good ventilation. Please ensure that your child wears sufficient layers on cold days. Coats may be worn but they must be plain and dark coloured (navy, black, grey or high-vis if cycling).
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I understand that this is a lot of information to take in at what is potentially quite a stressful time. We will include reminders of other key routines, particularly the changes relevant to the new building, in the Parent Bulletin for this week - please do read this carefully and get in touch if you have any questions. We look forward to welcoming your children back to school very soon.

Yours sincerely,



Kay Wood (Headteacher)

