



Friday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Dear parents and carers,

### **Secondary – March Return**

I hope you and your family are well. I am writing to you today with the great news that all schools have been asked by the Government to prepare to open, with students returning to secondary school on different days during the week of Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March. You will see that this is a lengthy letter that contains a lot of vital information about the return. Please do ensure you have read and understood everything prior to your child returning to school.

Our priority is the safety of our students, your family, and our staff. In this letter I will explain about two additions to our safety arrangements – changes to the use of face coverings, and a new requirement for testing.

I have also attached two other notes:

1. Detail on all the preventative arrangements
2. Information and consent forms for asymptomatic testing

### **Face Coverings**

Previously students were required to wear a mask when moving around indoor communal areas of the school, and in their classroom whenever social distancing was not possible.

The Government now recommends that face coverings should also be worn in classrooms or during activities unless social distancing can be maintained, and this recommendation remains in place until Easter, at which point the Government will review it. So students are expected and encouraged to wear a face mask throughout the school day. Students will be provided with a face mask for use in school. You can read further information on face masks in the accompanying note (Point 9.)

### **Asymptomatic testing**

Secondary schools have been asked to establish an Asymptomatic Testing Site where students and staff can take a Lateral Flow test. These tests give a result in 30 minutes and help identify people who are infectious but do not have symptoms.

Each student will be asked to take three tests in school, taken a few days apart across their first couple of weeks back at school. They will be able to return to their face-to-face lessons following their first negative test result. After they have completed the three tests at school, students will be supplied with Lateral Flow Test kits to take a test at home, twice a week.

Testing is voluntary but strongly encouraged as it provides additional confidence to the whole school community. For us to be able to test your child, we require your consent. Please see the accompanying consent letter.

### **A staggered return to school**

Due to complexities of testing so many students on their first day back, we will be having staggered start dates for each year group.

Please note that the children of critical workers and those identified as 'vulnerable' are to continue to come to school each day. When the rest of their year group returns, they will join their year group bubble.

Students in each year group will begin on the following days, with Year 11 and Year 13 in all week, then Year 10 and Year 12 from Tuesday, Year 9 from Wednesday, Year 7 from Thursday and finally Year 8 on Friday.

Date	Year 11 & Year 13	Year 10 & Year 12	Year 9	Year 7	Year 8
Mon 8 <sup>th</sup> March	In school	Remote	Remote	Remote	Remote
Tues 9 <sup>th</sup> March	In school	In school	Remote	Remote	Remote
Weds 10 <sup>th</sup> March	In school	In school	In school	Remote	Remote
Thurs 11 <sup>th</sup> March	In school	In school	In school	In school	Remote
Fri 12 <sup>th</sup> March	In school	In school	In school	In school	In school

### What do I need to do now?

Up to and including the week of Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March we continue to welcome children of critical workers and those identified as 'vulnerable' at school, all other students will continue with their remote learning until their day when they return to school as indicated above.

I know that there is a lot of information here, but we wanted you to be fully informed. We will of course be supporting the students as they return, ensuring that they are confident with all the arrangements we have in place.

Please note, we are asking for your consent for your child to undergo three flow tests at school. Please see the further information on this in the attached. If you have already given your consent for your child to be tested, please skip this step.

Please refer to our Privacy Notice, which explains how personal data will be used:  
[https://www.oasiscommunitylearning.org/uploaded/Oasis\\_Documents/OCL\\_Privacy\\_Notice.pdf](https://www.oasiscommunitylearning.org/uploaded/Oasis_Documents/OCL_Privacy_Notice.pdf)

Please read all the information provided carefully. If after reading everything you have any questions, please contact us by email to [office@oasisisleofsheppey.org](mailto:office@oasisisleofsheppey.org).

Thank you for your ongoing support to the Academy. To reopen safely, we will need everyone to continue to follow all the safety measures carefully.

Yours sincerely,



**Principal, Oasis Academy Isle of Sheppey**

## 1. Note on additional arrangements

### More information on our arrangements

Our preparations closely follow the guidance from the Government. You can read the advice by searching for [‘DfE What parents need to know during COVID-19.’](#)

#### 1. Attendance

The Government’s guidance is clear that students are expected to attend school during the week commencing Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March (please see more information on staggered starts in point 4 below). This means that parents have a duty to ensure that their child attends school for every day that it is open to students, and that schools have a responsibility to record attendance and follow up absence.

#### 2. Social Distancing

We will have a number of one-way systems in place to remind students about the importance of distancing wherever possible. Classrooms will be set up in a way to maximise individual students’ space. Desks will be side by side and forward facing. There will be as much ventilation as possible.

#### 3. Year group bubbles

As part of our social distancing precautions, your child’s year group will become a ‘bubble.’ Their bubble will be taught in a specific part of the school and will go to lunch and breaks together. This will help us to minimise contacts and mixing, while delivering a broad and balanced curriculum.

#### 4. A staggered return

To help with the requirement to test students at school on their return, we are staggering the start dates for each year group. Please see below.

<b>First Day arrangements</b>				
<b>Year group</b>	<b>First day back</b>	<b>Arrival time between</b>	<b>End time</b>	<b>Enter via</b>
Year 11 and Year 13	Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> March	8:00 – 8:25	3:00pm	Year 11 enter via left car gate. Follow pathway to Harty area. Year 13 to Sheerness Sixth Form
Year 10 and Year 12	Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup> March	8:00 – 8:25	Year 10: 2:55pm Year 12: 3:00pm	Year 10 enter via pedestrian gate. Line-up in fenced off section of top car park. Year 12 to Sheerness Sixth Form.

Year 9	Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup> March	8:00 – 8:25	2:55pm	Enter via left car gate. Line-up in Harty Courtyard
Year 7	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> March	8:00 – 8:25	3:00 pm	Enter via pedestrian gate. Line-up in Abbey Courtyard.
Year 8	Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> March	8:00 – 8:25	3:00 pm	Enter via pedestrian gate. Line-up in Shurland courtyard.

Please be reminded that if your child is, for example in Year 8, they will be taught online as usual until they return to school on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> March.

From Monday 15<sup>th</sup> March, we welcome all students back fully.

#### 5. Hygiene and cleaning

Good hygiene is everyone's responsibility, and we are all responsible for each other's health. We will maintain intensified cleaning routines with a focus on regularly wiping down door handles and hard surfaces. The Academy will be cleaned every day and there will be disinfectant sprays for cleaning purposes in each class.

#### 6. Cleaning hands

Everyone will clean their hands thoroughly and more often than usual. This can be done with soap and water or hand sanitiser. Students will clean their hands when they arrive at the school, before they go to break and lunch, and before they leave to go home. Hand sanitiser is available in every classroom, students can use whenever they enter or leave a room.

#### 7. Risk assessments

The thorough risk assessment we follow has been developed from the Government and detailed guidelines from the Oasis Community Learning. Our completed risk assessment will be signed off by the Oasis national leadership team along with myself as Principal, and will remain under constant review.

#### 8. Getting to and from school

The Government explain that students and staff may use public transport where necessary but encourage everyone to walk or cycle to and from school wherever it is possible and safe to do so. We know that this will not always be possible, so please let us know any concerns around this.

People aged 11 and over must wear a face covering when travelling on public transport. People who are exempt do not need to wear a face covering.

## 9. Face Coverings

When students arrive at school, they must safely remove their mask if they have used one whilst travelling to the academy, by using the straps rather than the front of the face covering. They will then be required to dispose of this mask in a covered bin, or place a reusable face coverings in a plastic bag/in their bag which they can pick up later/put on when leaving to go home.

Students will be directed to wear their academy mask on entry to the academy site, at the school gates. They will then be required to wash their hands.

The Academy face covering will be made of cloth and therefore is re-useable and washable. We ask that they are washed at home on a regular basis. They will be colour coded by year group and will be treated as an item of uniform.

Students are now required and encouraged to wear their face covering whilst in class. This requirement will be reviewed by the Government at Easter. This does not apply in situations where wearing a face covering would impact on the ability to take part in exercise or strenuous activity, for example in PE lessons.

When going to the dining hall, they should wear their covering on their face until they are seated for the purposes of eating. At this point they should remove their face covering and put it in their blazer pocket. After eating, the covering should be placed back on the face and hands must be sanitised.

Staff will be required to wear visors when teaching. They will be required also to wear a face mask when social distancing is not possible i.e. when they are supporting an individual student.

## 10. Water bottles

Students are required to bring in their own water bottle for their individual use. These must be labelled and can be re-filled during the day. This is important as we do not have facilities for the sale of drinks currently.

## 11. Uniform

All students will return in full uniform. They do not need to be cleaned more often than usual. The uniform shop in school will be open every day from Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March for uniform purchases. Please call the academy on 01795 873591 or via email to [office@oasisisleofsheppey.org](mailto:office@oasisisleofsheppey.org) to arrange a time to come in for purchases. Please note that we are only able to take payment via debit or credit cards only.

## 12. Suspected symptoms, a confirmed case, and multiple confirmed cases

If your young person develops symptoms at any time (such as a high temperature; a new, continuous cough; or a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste) they must immediately self-isolate, and book a test by calling 119 or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

## 13. Reduced access to outdoor visitors

To help us reduce the risk of infection, we are asking parents to communicate with us via the telephone on 01795 873591 or email [office@oasisisleofsheppey.org](mailto:office@oasisisleofsheppey.org).

If it is required for you to come into the Academy, you will be required to wear a disposable face covering provided by us unless you are exempt.

## 2. Consent for asymptomatic testing

### COVID-19 testing for staff and students

The government has asked secondary schools to offer Covid-19 tests known as 'lateral flow tests,' that provide a result within 30 mins. Up to a third of people who have coronavirus have no symptoms, so testing will improve our ability to stop the virus from spreading within school. We welcome these tests as an additional protective measure that will help keep everyone safe. The tests are quick and safe and will help us to identify if anyone has the coronavirus as early as possible.

- Students with a positive test result will need to self-isolate in line with the stay-at-home guidance. They will also need to arrange another test through <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test> to confirm the result.
- Students with a negative result can continue to attend school and use protective measures.

To undergo the asymptomatic testing, we must have your permission for your child to be tested three times on their return to school. After they have returned and been tested at school, students will be supplied with tests to self-swab and test themselves twice a week at home.

### Tests at school

Your young person will be asked to take a test immediately on their return to school (during the week beginning Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March), and then twice more within their first few weeks back.

### Tests at home

After your child has returned for the first week and been tested at school, students will be supplied with test kits to self-swab and test themselves twice a week at home. Students must report their result at home to NHS Test and Trace as soon as the test is completed either online or by telephone as per the instructions in the home test kit.

As an Academy, we would also encourage staff and students to share any positive results with us as soon as possible to help with contact tracing.

- Students aged 11 attending a secondary school can take the test themselves or with the support of an adult.
- Students aged 12 to 17 should self-test and report with adult supervision. The adult may conduct the test if necessary.
- Students aged 18 and over should self-test and report the result, with assistance if needed.

### What do I need to do now?

Please read the additional information on 'How will our process work?' below, and the accompanying NHS Test and Trace leaflet called 'How to do your test' and share this with your young person to explain what will happen.

Please also visit <https://www.oasiscommunitylearning.org/covid> to read the information on consent and our privacy notice. If, once you have read all the information, you would like to give your permission for your young person to be tested and your consent for us to handle the information around the results, **we will need to receive this confirmation ahead of their return.**

The quickest and easiest way to do this is by opening your MyChildAtSchool app, go to the parental and consent section and click the slider to green to grant consent. You can find copies of all of the important information including the full consent form in the Important Documents Section.

**OR** Please fill in the attached form, and return it by email to [office@oasisisleofsheppey.org](mailto:office@oasisisleofsheppey.org) as soon as possible.

**OR** Please look out for a separate email from us sent through the 'SignNow' service. That will enable you to provide an electronic signature. Please follow the instructions within this email, and return it as soon as possible. Families that have not already provided consent will receive an email from SignNow next week.

We are urging all families to agree to this safe and quick test three times within the first couple of weeks once your child has returned to school. If you do not give your permission or they do not consent, your child should attend school as normal and continue to follow all other safety precautions.

### **How will our process work?**

- All secondary students with parental consent will be tested as they return from 8<sup>th</sup> March.
- Those taking the test at school will be supervised by trained staff. The 'lateral flow' tests are quick and easy using a swab of your nose and throat.
- Results (which take around half an hour from testing) will be shared directly with students participating. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed of a positive result.
- Should a student or staff member receive a positive test, they will need to self-isolate for 10 days and take a further 'PCR test' (similar to those done in local testing sites) on the same day and minimise any further contact. You should call 119 to book a follow-up test. Once they have had the further test, they will need to self-isolate while they await the result. If the PCR test returns a positive result they will have to self-isolate for the full 10 days and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace.
- Should a student or staff member receive a negative test, they will be able to stay in school and resume their activities as normal. A student will only be told if they test positive on a 'lateral flow' test, so if you do not hear you can assume it was negative. A small number may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason.
- Studies conducted by Oxford University and Public Health England, show that the tests are accurate in identifying a case. The tests have lower sensitivity but they are better at picking up cases when a person has higher viral load, hence the need to test frequently.

### **What if my child develops symptoms?**

This testing programme at school is for people with no symptoms. If your young person develops symptoms at any time (such as a high temperature; a new, continuous cough; or a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste) they must immediately self-isolate, and book a test by calling 119 or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

## HOW TO DO YOUR TEST

WHILE THIS IS A SELF-SWAB TEST, THERE WILL BE A TESTING HELPER WHO WILL OVERSEE THINGS AND PROVIDE HELP IF YOU NEED


**1** YOUR COVID-19 TEST WILL BE SCHEDULED. IF YOU ARE UNDER 16, YOUR PARENT / CARER WILL HAVE CONSENTED

**2** YOUR TEST WILL BE FAST AND WHILE IT MIGHT FEEL A LITTLE UNCOMFORTABLE, IT WON'T HURT YOU

**3** BLOW YOUR NOSE IF NEEDED. WASH AND DRY/SANITISE YOUR HANDS. REMOVE THE SWAB BEING CAREFUL NOT TO TOUCH THE SOFT PART

**4** OPEN YOUR MOUTH WIDE AND USE A MIRROR TO LOOK AT THE BACK OF YOUR THROAT, THEN USE THE SWAB TO RUB FIRMLY 4 TIMES ON EACH SIDE

10 SECS



**5** REMOVE THE SWAB CAREFULLY WITHOUT TOUCHING YOUR TEETH, TONGUE OR GUMS

**6** GENTLY PLACE IT ABOUT 2-2.5 CM INSIDE ONE OF YOUR NOSTRILS. ROLL THE SWAB 4-5 TIMES ALONG THE LINING OF THE NOSTRIL, THIS WILL TAKE 10-15 SECONDS

**7** AFTER THIS, YOU'RE DONE, GENTLY REMOVE THE SWAB BEING CAREFUL NOT TO LET ANYTHING TOUCH THE TIP

**8** YOUR SWAB CAN THEN BE PLACED IN A TUBE FOR TESTING, THIS TAKES ABOUT 30 MINUTES

**9** YOUR SCHOOL / COLLEGE WILL CONTACT YOU OR YOUR PARENT / CARER WITH THE RESULTS AND LET YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

