

Monday, 01 March 2021



PARK HALL
ACADEMY

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ASSOCIATE HEADTEACHER: DR T CLOSE

Dear Parents/ Carers

I am writing to update you with our proposed opening arrangements following the publication from the government about the optional testing of students and the return to school. You will have heard in the media that the expectation is that schools will open from Monday 8th March to all students. Following government guidance, **the return of pupils will be phased during the first week to manage the number of pupils passing through the test site at any one time.** In order to undertake this safely we have established the following timetable below. Students whose parents have consented to them taking part in the testing programme, **will be asked to come into school for their 1st test and then will return home.** Exact timings will be sent out later this week to reduce student mixing. The day after, their year group will then return to in person teaching in school.

The timetable for testing and school return is as follows:

| | | Y7 | Y8 | Y9 | Y10 | Y11 | Y12 | Y13 |
|-----|------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Mon | 01/03/2021 | Online |
| Tue | 02/03/2021 | Online |
| Wed | 03/03/2021 | Online |
| Thu | 04/03/2021 | Online |
| Fri | 05/03/2021 | Online | Online | Online | Online | Online | Test 1 | Test 1 |
| Mon | 08/03/2021 | Online | Online | Online | Online | Test 1 | Return | Return |
| Tue | 09/03/2021 | Online | Online | Online | Test 1 | Return | School | School |
| Wed | 10/03/2021 | Online | Online | Test 1 | Return | School | School | School |
| Thu | 11/03/2021 | Online | Test 1 | Return | School | School | School | School |
| Fri | 12/03/2021 | Test 1 | Return | School | School | School | School | School |
| Mon | 15/03/2021 | Return | School | School | School | School | School | School |



On days where it says...

- **Online** - teachers will continue to deliver lessons using Teams, as they have done since January 2021. Teachers will be delivering these lessons from their classrooms rather than being at home.
- **Test 1** – students will come in for testing throughout the day, during the window they have been given. On these days, students will be set tasks online, which they can complete that day, at a time to suit them. This flexibility will help students and their families with accommodating the need to go for a test.
- **Return/ School** – students will be in school for in-person teaching.

Any pupils not undergoing testing should attend school on their phased return date as indicated in the table above.

All students will be learning fully onsite from Monday 15th March onwards. The plan for testing into the second week and beyond requires a certain level of patience and flexibility as we address the enormous challenges of mass testing on this scale but envisage one year group per day will be tested. (Mon – Y11, Tue – Y10, Wed – Y9, Thu – Y8, Fri – Y7, Yr12/13 throughout the week).

Testing is voluntary but pupils are strongly encouraged to take part to support the return to face to face education. **Consent forms must be completed** via the following link if you have not already done so:

<https://tinyurl.com/y57uxati>

Attendance

The government has made it explicitly clear that attendance to the academy is mandatory from your child's designated phased return date.

Home Testing

Following the completion of the three in-school COVID-19 tests, pupils and staff in secondary schools will be supplied with LFD test kits to self-swab and test themselves twice a week at home. We will advise you when we have further details from the government.

Wearing of face coverings

On their return to school, students will be required to wear masks in all indoor areas where 2 metre distancing cannot be maintained, including classrooms. We understand that wearing a mask all day may be uncomfortable, therefore we will be encouraging students to remove their masks at break times and lunchtimes when they are outside. Children who are exempt from wearing masks will be issued with an exemption pass so that the wider school community are aware of their exemption. Senior leaders will work with students / parents where there are concerns about this. As with the Autumn Term, we are expecting high levels of compliance with this measure and staff and senior leaders will work hard to encourage any students without face masks to comply. We hope that everyone in the school community will do all they can to keep themselves and others as safe as

possible. Please note that there are many members of our school community who are either personally at greater risk or live with someone with a serious condition. There may well be occasions where teachers need to remove their face covering in order to teach effectively. On these occasions we will ask all staff to ensure that they are at least 2 metres away from the nearest contact. **Please make sure your child has sufficient face coverings as disposable masks break easily and we do not have a limitless supply. One parent shared a tip that he always adds a spare face mask to his son's blazer pocket, just in case. (We may have to consider charging for face masks if students do not bring an appropriate face covering)**

I continue to be hugely impressed at how well our students have adapted to online learning. We know that this doesn't happen by chance and I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support in ensuring your child works well during these challenging times. Our internal tracking shows an excellent picture well beyond that seen nationally.

Yours faithfully,



Dr T Close
Associate Headteacher