



2 March 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian

Thank you for your ongoing support and patience whilst we have been reading and digesting the latest Government guidance with respect to the re-opening of schools from 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021. Thank you also to all parents who have completed the consent paperwork for their son/daughter to undergo lateral flow device testing (LFDT) as recommended by the Government. If you are still to do this please click on the following link:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=WwlpOb3F7ECiSBghIHVh9FoHjEnkMmINqw7RtNixWx5UN09YWjg2MUJYNDdWVE05V1IPUkpHVFYySi4u>

Please find below the details of our plan for reopening and testing schedule as well as some other critical information about the operation of the school moving forward. This information will be shared with students during an extended online **tutor period on Thursday (11.30am – 12.30pm)** but I would be grateful if you would spend some time talking through with them the contents of this letter.

Our details of how student learning and timetables will operate for Thursday, Friday and Monday will be sent out tomorrow morning.

### **Return to School**

The Government have been explicit in their expectations in the week commencing 8<sup>th</sup> March all students should begin to return to face to face education. Both Oxfordshire and Reading School Transport services will resume from Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March and parents should note that attendance at school returns to being mandatory. Government have allowed schools to take a phased approach to the return to school to allow for onsite testing of students to occur before they re-enter the classroom (see further information below).

#### **At MECE we have planned for the following return schedule:**

**Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March:** all students in Years 10 and 11 are expected to attend school. Years 7-9 will have remote provision in place on this day.

**Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> March:** All students in all year groups return to school

On both these days there will be an extended tutor period in the morning to revisit expectations with students but that following that (from period 2) the normal timetable will resume. **A reminder to students that this will be Week 1.**

### **Student Lateral Flow Device Testing (LFDT)**

The Government guidance is that all students (for whom we have consent) undertake 3 LFDT upon their return to school. These should ideally be spaced 3-5 days apart. The first of these tests should be undertaken before students return to face to face teaching.



*We will commence Round 1 of testing on Friday March 5<sup>th</sup> and continue on Monday March 8<sup>th</sup>.*

Students will be invited to attend at a specific time on either Friday and Monday – we have used the responses in the survey you have completed to help us construct the timetable. **By now you should have received a communication with details of when we would like your child to attend school, what the testing involves and where students should go when they arrive to site.**

Students **will not** be expected to wear school uniform if they are only coming to site for their first LFDT.

Rounds 2 and 3 of the testing will take place within the school day on Wednesday & Thursday 10/11<sup>th</sup> March and Monday & Tuesday 15/16<sup>th</sup> March.

Following the third round of testing students will revert to home testing and we will share information about this, including how-to guides to support students and families closer to the time.

Please note – if your son/daughter has been attending PopUp (and does so on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March) they **DO NOT** need to attend Round 1 of the 'return to school testing' on Friday 5 / Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March.

**The School Day**

<b>Registration</b> 8:45 - 9:05
<b>Period 1</b> 9:05 - 10:05
<b>Period 2</b> 10:05 - 11:05
<b>Break 1</b> 11:05 - 11:35
<b>Period 3</b> 11:35 - 12:35
<b>Break 2</b> 12:35 - 13:05
<b>Period 4</b> 13:05 - 14:10
<b>Period 5</b> 14:10 - 15:10



### **Onsite Logistics – effective from 8 March**

Please find below some of the key on site practical operational procedures that will be in place. For students they should not see a significant difference to how the school day operated back in the Autumn Term (with the exception of the updated guidance on face coverings – further detail below):

- A **KS3 / KS4 bubble** system will be in place
- The **structure of the day** will revert to that of December 2020 and can be found in the diagram on the right.
- A **one-way system** in place for the site – students will be reminded of this in the tutor briefing on Thursday 3 March (11.30am-12.30pm)
- **Clubs and activities** will resume (in KS3/4 bubbles) from w.c. 15 March

### **Face Coverings**

The latest guidance from the Government has changed with regards to face coverings. Effective from 8 March the wording has changed to the following:

*Where pupils in Year 7 (which would be children who were aged 11 on 31 August 2020) and above are educated, we recommend that face coverings should be worn by adults and pupils when moving around the premises, outside of classrooms, such as in corridors and communal areas where social distancing cannot easily be maintained. Face coverings do not need to be worn by pupils when outdoors on the premises.*

*In addition, we now also recommend in those schools, that face coverings should be worn in classrooms or during activities unless social distancing can be maintained. 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.*

The second paragraph is particularly important and is a change in stance from the Government. We are therefore expecting all students, unless medically exempt, to wear face coverings when inside any building at school. The only exemption to this will be when students are sat down to eat their lunch or when practical PE or Dance is taught indoors. The risk of transmission is significantly lower when outside and therefore the wearing of face coverings is optional when out of buildings to allow students the opportunity to have a break from wearing them as they walk around site.

Teachers, when teaching from the 2-metre box at the front of the room will not be required to wear a covering but will be expected to put one on should they leave that space.

### **Uniform & Equipment**

Students are expected to return to school in full and correct school uniform (including PE and Dance kit) and with a complete Tools for Learning set. The school uniform list can be found [here](#) and the Tools for Learning list can be found [here](#). We understand that students will have grown but ask that you support our efforts to uphold the high standards that are now



associated with the school by making every effort to getting replacement uniform ahead of the reopening dates.

**Pre-loved uniform:** Please contact CESA (through their Facebook page) who carry a large stock of pre-loved uniform in a range of sizes.

**Tools for Learning:** Student Services hold a stock of the basic equipment for purchase.

Students who have had their exercise books at home during this period of remote learning are asked to ensure these returns to school on the day of their first lesson in that subject. Additionally, for those in Year 11 a reminder that you are asked to bring any copies of 'old' exercise books that span across Year 10 or Year 11 into school and given to your class teacher as they may help provide supporting evidence for your grade in the summer.

**And finally...**

Thorough risk assessments have been completed and have been sent to the Trust for approval. We will upload these to our website by Thursday 4 March at the latest.

We are incredibly grateful to our entire MECE community for their support during this extended period of remote provision and now as we navigate the challenges associated with reopening.

Yours Sincerely

Andy Hartley  
Headteacher