

26 February 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

**Re: Full reopening – March return**

I hope you and your families remain well and have been given a sense of hope following the Government's announcement on Monday.

We are very much looking forward to welcoming back all year groups in a **staggered return between 8<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> March**. I wanted to write to you to outline our initial plans in order for the school to open safely in light of the guidance that the Government has published for schools. Further information can be found by clicking [here](#).

This letter has been written to also remind you of the key changes to our school structures and timetable to reduce movement around the site and corridors with students remaining in year group 'bubbles'. Our site team have already reconfigured the school site to ensure the whole community remains safe.

**Mass testing of students and staff for Covid-19**

Year	Date of 1 <sup>st</sup> Test	Return Date
12/13	Thu 04 Mar	Mon 08 Mar
11	Fri 05 Mar	Mon 08 Mar
10	Mon 08 Mar	Tue 09 Mar
7	Tue 09 Mar	Wed 10 Mar
9	Wed 10 Mar	Thu 11 Mar
8	Thu 11 Mar	Fri 12 Mar

- All children and young people who have consented either individually or through you as parents and carers will be tested the day before returning to the Academy.
- We have designed the timetable below, starting with exam groups to test students as they return. The first test will be taken before the students return to school, the following two tests will be taken during the school day on their return.
- Every parent in the Academy should have responded to provide or decline the mass testing offer for students as we return. Please contact Ms Gallagher on [agallagher@stmarks.anthemtrust.uk](mailto:agallagher@stmarks.anthemtrust.uk) if you have not received the consent form virtually.
- We strongly advise that you consent to mass testing to keep your child, family and our whole community safe.
- All students for whom consent has been gained will be tested **three times over two weeks**. The second two tests will be carried out while they are in school and you will be notified of the outcome. Students will be able to come on site to begin lessons the day after their first negative test.
- If you do not consent to your child being tested, they will be expected in school on the return date for their year group shown above. Please ensure they arrive at their usual start time shown below.

## Home Testing

Following the first three tests on site, pupils and staff will be supplied with LFD test kits to self-swab and test themselves twice a week at home. Staff and pupils must report their result to NHS Test and Trace and share their result with their school to help with contact tracing.

- Staff or pupils with a positive LFD test result will need to self-isolate in line with the stay-at-home guidance. They will also need to arrange a PCR test to confirm the result if the test was done at home.

## Timings of the school day

- We will continue to stagger the start, break, lunch and the end of the school day so that the year group bubbles enter and leave the site with minimum interaction. It is really important that your child arrives at the designated time and entrance as stated below so that they arrive with other students in their year group bubble and do not mix with other year groups. A reminder of times of the day for each year group are given below.

	<b>Year 7</b>	<b>Year 8</b>	<b>Year 9</b>	<b>Year 10</b>	<b>Year 11</b>	<b>Sixth Form</b>	<b>Progress Academy</b>
<b>Entrance</b>	Reception Gate (Acacia Road)	Main Gate (Tamworth Lane)	Reception Gate (Acacia Road)	Main Gate (Tamworth Lane)	Reception Gate (Acacia Road)	Reception Gate (Acacia Road)	Reception Gate (Acacia Road)
<b>Start of Day</b>	8.20am	8.30am	8.50am	9.10am	9.20am	9.20am	10.00am
<b>End of Day</b>	2.30pm	2.40pm	3.00pm	3.20pm	3.30pm	3.30pm	2.00pm

## Face coverings

- Face coverings should be worn in classrooms or during activities unless social distancing of 2 metres or more can be maintained. This does not apply to situations where wearing a face covering would impact on the ability to take part in exercise or strenuous activity, for example in PE lessons.
- 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.

## How will my child be welcomed back after their negative test?

- During your child's first day I will personally greet them in an assembly where I will be reminding them about our systems, expectations and operating procedures to keep each other safe. All year groups will complete an induction programme to reintegrate our students back into an educational setting with support and care at the heart of it. The induction process delivered by our dedicated pastoral members will alleviate and fears, stress and anxiety some students might have been feeling throughout lockdown. Students will be reunited with their coach who will provide clarity around the rules and routines within the Academy, whilst developing a trusting and meaningful relationship with both the students and in subsequent weeks their parents.

## What if my child is in Year 11 and 13?

- We could not be happier to welcome back our GCSE and A Level groups at such a crucial time in their education journey.
- Students will receive a specialised induction programme designed to provide them with the most up to date guidance on how their grades will be calculated this summer. Students in Year 11 will receive guidance on the next steps for enrolment and entry into our Sixth Form this September.
- The outcome of the examination consultation which was released yesterday will be shared with parents and carers in a virtual Teams event before the Easter break. Please look out for communication about this over the next few weeks.

### **Parents visiting the site**

- Parents will only be able to come onto the school site in the case of emergencies, for example if your child is ill and needs to be picked up. All other parental meetings should be arranged either by telephone or virtually with staff and other agencies. We expect this to be the normal situation until government guidance change.

### **Enrichment and Intervention**

- We are passionate about supporting students to make the best progress possible so from 8th March we will work to resume all before and after-school educational activities where this provision is part of pupil's wider education and training. More information will follow outlining our enrichment offer.

### **Blended Learning (RSE)**

The teaching staff here at the academy will work hard to ensure that every student feels confident about their learning. To support your child, all teachers will:

1. Put their lessons on Microsoft Teams so that your child can revise in their own time or catch-up if they miss a lesson.
2. Put knowledge organisers on MS Teams and on the website so your child can revise for quizzes in lessons.
3. Set online Microsoft Forms or online (e.g. Educake) exit ticket homework quizzes once-twice a week to help us to find out what your child is confident with and what they need more help with. Instructions and links to each quiz will also be placed on Show my Homework.
4. Provide your child with individual feedback, based on the quizzes.
5. Actively support and guide your child in completing these quizzes.
6. Reward your child with a positive on Sims for successfully completing the Exit Ticket HW quiz.
7. Provide a timetable of access to ICT rooms after school for students who need support with accessing a computer

### **Maintaining High Expectations**

Our values of Love, Hope and Trust permeate across all that we do. We expect all students to arrive to the Academy each day fully equipped to learn. We expect all students to have a school bag and all appropriate equipment, every day. Full uniform is a requirement – any student not wearing full and correct St Mark's uniform will not be permitted to access mainstream lessons. For the avoidance of doubt, the uniform code is listed below.

Please note:

- Visible makeup is not permitted e.g. lip gloss, mascara, eye shadow.
- Nail varnish is not permitted. Nail extensions or decorations are not permitted on health and safety grounds.
- No jewellery except for a wristwatch and one pair of plain stud earrings are permitted. No facial piercings are permitted.
- Mobile phones, mp3 players, portable gaming devices or tablets are not permitted on site.

### **Uniform Expectations**

Can I ask you to ensure that all aspects of your child's uniform are in place for the start of the new academic term, including full PE kit. Full details of the uniform expectation can be found [here](#).

### **Equipment Expectations**

In order to set the tone of the Academy day and to create a calm and studious atmosphere within the building, we provide students with clear routines to follow at the beginning and end of lessons. In preparation for the wider world and to promote academic success we expect students to arrive at the Academy each day fully equipped to learn.

At St Marks Academy we have a list of equipment that is essential and must be present every day alongside a list of recommended items that students may find useful to carry with them.

<b>Essential daily equipment</b>	<b>Recommended daily equipment</b>
Pen – Black or blue ink	Pencil case
Pen - Green	Glue
Pencil	Colours
Ruler	Maths set
Planner	Highlighters
Reading book	Water bottle
<b>Reusable mask</b>	
<b>Hand sanitizer</b>	
Calculator	

### **Behaviour Expectations**

At St Marks we have firm behavioural procedures in place that give students the opportunity to make the right decisions. We offer our students reminders as a means of readjusting their behaviour and have firm intervention structures in place to support any struggles that students may experience. Our procedures are delivered with transparency and consistency. Behavioural issues are centralised and overseen by our Vice Principal of Behaviour and Attitudes and Behaviour for Learning Lead to ensure that the expectations of our students' behaviour are caring yet uncompromising. Acknowledgement of exceptional and exemplary behaviour is also at the forefront of our procedures. Teachers make frequent positive phone calls home, nominate students for awards, distribute achievement points and offer verbal praise in the classroom.

### **Pastoral Support**

We pride ourselves at St Marks on our pastoral support provision. We have a dedicated student Well-being Co-ordinator, Director on Inclusion, Student Support team, Progress Leaders for each year group, coaches and Designated Safeguarding Lead. Our student support team aims to nurture the entire student and celebrate their differences and elevate and adversities they may face. Where possible we seek to offer all pastoral support internally but also recognise that external intervention may be more suitable for some of our students. In such cases we make referrals in a timely and precise manner.

### **Attendance**

The government have made it really clear that all parents must send their child back to school and have reinstated the procedures for fining parents for non-compliance. Research also shows that the long-term risk to students' lives for not returning is significantly greater than the very small risk to students of COVID-19. We expect all students to return to school and want to work with you if you have any reservations to ensure that your child does not get further behind in their academic progress. Please contact Ms Van Zyl on [NVanZyl@stmarks.anthemtrust.uk](mailto:NVanZyl@stmarks.anthemtrust.uk) if you have any questions about attendance.

### **Catch-up Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March**

We want to make sure all students are up to date and on top of the most important lessons that have been covered so far this term, ready for return next week. With this in mind, this Friday will be a day for them to carry out the following steps in all subjects. More details will be posted on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March in the morning.

1. Review two lessons, ensuring they have detailed notes in note books. They can upload photos to demonstrate this.
2. Re-take the key quizzes
3. Respond to marking by redrafting their work
4. Optional Stretch Task: complete a research task to really push themselves with some of our most challenging key concepts

### **Catering**

Parents are now requested to **top up student's lunch accounts online**. Parents will be required to make any necessary top ups at least 2 hours before the student is required to use the funds. This is to allow the system time to update and for the funds to become available. In exceptional circumstances if parents are unable to top up online then Academy staff will assist students to top up their accounts manually. This will need to have been discussed with a member of the student support team or the student's coach prior to needing to top up. You can top up your child's dinner account [here](#). The canteen **will not** be open for breakfast service at the moment.

We pray that you have a restful and safe week and are thrilled to be able to welcome students back to the community that will love, encourage, challenge and support them endlessly.

With Love, Hope and Trust

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Hannah Fahey', written in black ink.

Hannah Fahey  
**Acting Principal**