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Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you for your patience in waiting for me to write to you following the Prime Minister's announcement on Monday. As you are now aware, the Government expects all schools to fully open for students on 8th March 2021 to engage in a broad and balanced curriculum. We are now busy preparing for a full return of students and looking forward to seeing everyone and getting back to our normal timetable: [Additional operational guidance for special schools, special post-16 institutions and alternative provision \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

“From 8th March 2021 school attendance is mandatory for all pupils. It is vital for pupils and students to attend school or college to minimise, as far as possible, the longer-term impact of the pandemic on their education, wellbeing and wider development.”

If your child is clinically extremely vulnerable, the guidance strongly recommends your child remain at home and for these students only, remote learning will continue. The expectation is, all other students return on Monday 8th March 2021.

In the latest guidance, the systems of control in school are almost the same as in September 2020, so we are well prepared for these. The Government have brought in an additional measure for the use of face masks in classrooms up until Easter for secondary school aged students. However, there is an important exemption for you to be aware of:

“Those who rely on visual signals for communication, or speak to or provide support to such individuals, are currently also exempt from any requirement to wear face coverings in schools or in public place”.

Therefore, as a staff team we will not be wearing face coverings in our classes due to the communication needs of our students. We already wear face coverings in the corridors and at the end of the day as our bubbles mix for transport. We would want this to continue until guidance allows us to socially mix.

The vaccine programme is firmly underway which is very positive and we will continue to carry out two lateral flow tests per week on staff.

- We will return to our normal timetable from the 8th March 2021.
- Current timings of the start and end of day will stay in place.

Please speak to your child's tutor if you have any questions about the full return and as always, we will work with you to support your child to return to school successfully.

Kindest regards

Sam Barham
Headteacher