

Friday, 26 February 2021



THE CORBET SCHOOL

Headteacher Dr Jane Tinker BSc MA(Ed) EdD NPQH

Dear Parent / Carer

I do hope that you all had a lovely half term and that you are feeling better now that there is some more certainty surrounding the wider re-opening of schools and the road map out of lockdown. I feel a little more hopeful and certainly the more spring like weather and lighter mornings and evenings are helping with that.

We will be operating a phased return in the week beginning the 8th of March to enable us to test all the pupils who have given consent for this. A huge thank you to our whole community, so far 632 pupils have given consent to be tested, which is 85% of our school population. I will outline some detail regarding the testing procedures in this letter but there will be more detail to follow, as I am sure you can appreciate this is a logistical challenge for us to do alongside the normal business of school. The phased entry will be as set out below:

Day	Year Groups in school
Monday 8 th March	11
Tuesday 9 th March	11, 10
Wednesday 10 th March	11, 10, 9
Thursday 11 th March	11, 10, 9, 8
Friday 12 th March	11, 10, 9, 8, 7

The current pupils in attendance on site will attend as normal during this week as the key worker and vulnerable child provision is still in place. Remote learning will be in place for those pupils who are at home before their year group returns.

There have been very limited changes to the way that the school operated before the Christmas holidays. We have been reminded to focus on 'hands, face, space', ventilating the classrooms, retaining our enhanced cleaning and retaining the class and year group bubbles. The previous guidance in our Covid-19 Risk Assessment still applies. Pupils will follow their previous timetable and we will still be having split break and lunchtimes with year group zones to reduce mixing. The main change is that up until the Easter break (and possibly longer) face coverings must be worn by everyone who does not have an exemption in the classroom and moving around the school site. This is the guidance we are working to:

'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

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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.'

I thank you in advance for your support with this.

Mass testing and home testing is also a change – the guidance says that:

'Secondary schools should offer pupils testing at an on-site ATS from 8 March. Testing and return of pupils can be phased during the first week to manage the number of pupils passing through the test site at any one time. You should offer 3 tests, 3 to 5 days apart. You have the flexibility to consider how best to deliver testing on a phased basis from 8 March, depending on your circumstances and local arrangements, but you should prioritise vulnerable children and children of critical workers, and year groups 10 to 13. Pupils should return to face-to-face education following their first negative test result. Pupils not undergoing testing should attend school in line with your phased return arrangements. Schools will have discretion on how to test students over that week as they return to the classroom.'

Our initial plans to begin the testing programme are as follows:

Day	Year Group having their first test
Thursday 4 th March	11
Friday 5 th March	10
Monday 8 th March	9
Tuesday 9 th March	8
Wednesday 10 th March	7

As you can see in the guidance, 'Pupils should return to face-to-face education following their first negative test result'. To enable this to happen, we will be kindly asking parents/carers to bring pupils to school for their first test as outlined in the table above, then return them home until their phased return day. This system appeared to work very well for the Year 8 HPV vaccinations recently, so we hope parents/carers are able to help us to run the first day of testing this way. More details will follow.

For each pupil's second and third test, this will be carried out once their year group have returned to face-to-face education by pupils leaving lessons for a short period of time. Once the pupils have completed 3 tests with us on site, they will then be issued with home test kits and more detail will follow on this.

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I have not forgotten about Year 11, we will update them on the Ofqual guidance once we have digested it, it arrived with us yesterday in school and I would say at this stage that they just need to continue with a positive mindset, a determination to do their best and leave the worrying to us. We will all get through it and we are there to help and support. We are hoping to have a Year 11 assembly next Friday, prior to their return, where we can outline more information about Centre Assessed Grades and any in school assessments. Until that point please encourage them to continue to engage with their Zoom lessons and work and be reassured that we will support the pupils through the next few months and are absolutely confident that we can successfully work through it together and are hopeful that we might be able to plan the Leavers' BBQ and Leavers' Ball if all goes well with the lifting of the wider restrictions.

I would ask that all pupils return to school in full uniform, with extra layers if the weather is cold and a reminder that the usual jewellery and make-up rules will apply.

Next week, the PE department will send out a separate letter to parents/carers, and to pupils via Satchel:One regarding PE kit required for lessons.

If, over the next week, we can help in any way at all or if you or your son/daughter are feeling anxious about the return to school, please do get in touch either by phone or using the pastoral@corbetschool.net email.

We have missed the pupils and are very much looking forward to seeing them back and hopefully now the end of this is in sight and we can look forward to the promise of spring and summer and a return to normality.

With best wishes to you and your families,



Dr Jane Tinker
Headteacher