



30<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Dear Parents & Carers

I hope in the circumstances you will understand my communicating during the holiday. Following what I hope has been a happy and restful Christmas for us all, I write in light of this afternoon's announcement from the Secretary of State for Education to detail our current position regarding the staggered start to the new term and the testing process.

Whilst schools have been instructed to remain closed to all students next week, we will provide online learning for students in all Years so they can progress with their learning from Monday. We will again forward the Microsoft Teams guidance in a separate communication. Students will need to log in to Teams and follow their timetabled lessons.

From Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January, students due to sit public examinations will attend school. This is all students in Years 11, 12 & 13. All other Year groups will continue with remote learning. Unless instructed otherwise all Years will attend from Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January.

At all times from Monday 4<sup>th</sup>, children of critical workers and vulnerable children can also attend. Please email [jma@sjp.essex.sch.uk](mailto:jma@sjp.essex.sch.uk) and the Head of Year if your child will be attending.

## ROUTINE & SERIAL TESTING

Having been advised that students and staff identified as close contacts would be eligible for serial testing in the initial phase, with weekly routine tests available only to staff, yesterday we received updated guidance stating that all students are to be tested twice upon their return to school, a minimum of three days apart. Following this they will be tested only if identified as a close contact of a positive case. Weekly testing will be available only to staff.

We will provide further information in due course. In the meantime, I hope the following will address some of the queries you may have regarding the testing process.

## CONSENT

No student will be tested without first obtaining consent from the student and a parent. Where consent is obtained, we would still inform parents & carers of any occasion their child requires a test. Please complete the form via <https://cutt.ly/ijrf8MJ> or download via <https://cutt.ly/FjrgeU5>. This can be printed and returned with your child upon their return to school, or scanned and emailed to [mmo@sjp.essex.sch.uk](mailto:mmo@sjp.essex.sch.uk). Students not participating will still be able to attend school.

## WHAT TESTING TAKES PLACE WHEN STUDENTS RETURN?

Students giving consent will be tested upon their return. Following a negative result, they will attend lessons as normal. Should a student test positive, they will need to be collected by a parent and undertake a PCR test (a regular COVID test) in line with national guidance. All students will be tested a second time within their first week back, the aim being 3 - 5 days after the first test.



### **IS THERE TESTING AFTER THE INITIAL TWO TESTS?**

Only if a student displays symptoms. Students identified as a close contact of a positive case will be able to continue attending school and will receive a rapid test in school every day for a week.

### **CAN MY CHILD ATTEND SCHOOL FOR A TEST IF THEY ARE SYMPTOMATIC?**

No. If a child is ever symptomatic the household must isolate and get an NHS test. This guidance is unchanged. The purpose of this testing is to identify asymptomatic cases and to prevent unnecessary isolation of students from education who are close contacts.

### **HOW WILL TESTING BE CONDUCTED IN SCHOOL?**

Arrangements will be confirmed in due course. We envisage using our larger indoor spaces. There will be testing, administration, and waiting areas. We will establish distancing to prevent the need for further contact tracing in the event of a student testing positive.

### **WHAT HAPPENS IF I DO NOT WISH TO GIVE CONSENT FOR MY CHILD TO BE TESTED?**

You have the right to not give consent and your child will still be able to attend school. The difference will be that following a positive test they will undertake the normal isolation period.

### **DOES A CHILD NEED CONSENT IF THEY ARE 16 OR OVER?**

No, children aged 16 or over can provide or withhold their own consent.

### **WHO WILL ADMINISTER THE TESTS?**

Students will administer the test themselves under guidance and be overseen by staff and volunteers who will have undergone the published training to supervise the test.

### **CAN I VOLUNTEER TO HELP?**

We may well need help from volunteers, and would be very appreciative of your support. Please email Mrs Morley [mmo@sjp.essex.sch.uk](mailto:mmo@sjp.essex.sch.uk) if you are able to help in any way.

Please be aware the situation may change. We will continue to amend our plans in response to national guidance. As ever, the physical and mental health & wellbeing of our whole community remains our paramount concern. Thank you for your continued understanding and support.

Yours sincerely



Mr T. Coen

Headteacher