

26<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Dear Parents and Carers of Year 9 Students

Thank you for your patience this week as we read and digested the latest advice from the Government. I am able to write to you now to share further information regarding the full re-opening of schools which will take place in the week commencing 8<sup>th</sup> March. We are delighted that all our students will be returning to our classrooms in just a few days and we are very much looking forward to getting back to a more recognisable school rhythm. Please find below important information regarding the approach we will be taking to school re-openings at The Dean Academy.

### **Lateral Flow Testing**

- All secondary school students will take three COVID-19 tests over two weeks as they return to the classroom from 8<sup>th</sup> March within the testing facilities at school.
- Students are able to attend face to face lessons as normal after they have received their first negative test result.
- To enable all students to take this first test safely, and for us to get students back into our classrooms as swiftly, it is necessary for us to implement a **staggered start** over the first three days of the week beginning 8<sup>th</sup> March.
- Please see details below for your child's first days. Due to the logistical challenges presented by the need to test the entire school population please can we ask you to ensure your child arrives promptly for their test.

Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> March	<b>All year 9 students remain at home and join online lessons</b>				
Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup> March	Students should arrive at the main entrance at the correct time for their first test according to the timings below:				Students will be able to attend normal lessons from p3 onwards after receiving a negative test result
	Wherever possible we ask students who normally take the bus to <u>make other arrangements to arrive at the correct time</u> , but for those who can only travel by bus they will be supervised until the time of their test	<u>9AW</u> 1030	<u>9DC</u> 1045	<u>9RL</u> 1100	

Wednesday 9 <sup>th</sup> March onwards	Arrive to school as normal at 0845 and attend normal lessons
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- Each of the tests needs to be 3-5 days apart and as such students will take their second and third test between 10<sup>th</sup> March and 18<sup>th</sup> March in school.
- After the initial programme of three tests in school, students will be provided with two rapid tests to use each week at home. Further guidance will follow on this.
- Finally, we know there will be some anxiety about testing itself. The test, which is carried out by students themselves, is quick and easy to administer and gives results rapidly. We have produced a short video which we would encourage you to watch with your child. We hope that seeing what is involved in this process before coming in to school will help to ease any nerves. Please use this link for the video [https://videos.files.wordpress.com/KzQ6B2kW/covid-19-testing\\_hd.mp4](https://videos.files.wordpress.com/KzQ6B2kW/covid-19-testing_hd.mp4)

\* Please note that lateral flow testing is voluntary, and we require consent. It is really encouraging to see that consent has been given for the overwhelming majority of our young people – if you have not yet done so please indicate consent [using this form](#). If you've previously given consent you do not need to do it again, but if you have given but now wish to withdraw consent that can be done using this form.

### **Enhanced safety measures including face coverings**

From 8<sup>th</sup> March all staff and students in secondary schools are advised to wear face coverings in all areas, including classrooms, where social distancing cannot be maintained and as a temporary extra measure.

We know that a small number of students are exempt from wearing face coverings for medical reasons and we will continue to support these students. However, all other students will be expected to wear face coverings at all times when indoors at The Dean Academy from Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March. The government will review this instruction at Easter, and we will communicate further.

The safety measures which we established at the Academy, and students became familiar with, from September to December which include the bubble system, separate entrances/exits, reduced movement around site and regular hand sanitizing will remain in place.

### **Standards**

Please also note that students will be expected to return to school in full uniform. It is important that we set, and hold ourselves to, high standards when school re-opens despite the significant challenges, we have faced due to Covid-19. If you are unsure of the expectations





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Richard Brand: Headteacher

around uniform, please see our website (<https://thedeanacademy.org/uniform/>) which also details where uniform can be purchased. Should you have any difficulty in ensuring your child has access to full uniform please contact us as we can help. Again, please do not wait until your child returns to school to reach out. On arrival, if any child does not have full uniform, we will make available to them shoes/a blazer until they can be purchased. All loaned uniform is washed and meets our high expectations around COVID safety.

### **Buses**

For students who use school transport please be reminded of the guidance that we need students to follow when taking the bus <https://thedeanacademy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/School-Bus-Timetable-2020-2021.pdf>

Should you have any questions or queries regarding our re-opening plans specific to your child please do not hesitate to get in contact via [info@thedeanacademy.org](mailto:info@thedeanacademy.org).

Finally, we know that the last eight weeks have been long and tiring for families and staff, but it has also been inspiring and uplifting. The whole community has pulled together to ensure pupils felt safe and supported, and we have shown just how much can be achieved in the most difficult and challenging of circumstances. No matter what your experience of lockdown, parents have been terrific: on behalf of all staff, we want to thank you for everything you have done to support your children's success over this period, and to support our school.

Yours sincerely

**Richard Brand**  
Headteacher

RJB/TW - return to school-year 9-260221



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