



23rd February 2021

Dear Parents and carers,

Covid-19 Update: Return to School on 8th March

As we begin the new half term, I am very pleased to be writing to you following the Prime Minister's announcement yesterday that all students will be allowed to return to school on Monday 8th March.

I know that this news will be greatly welcomed by parents, students and staff alike, and I would like to thank you for your support since January whilst students have been learning from home. We have all managed very well over the lockdown, with learning progressing across all year groups and our Year 11 students are in good shape for whatever is ultimately announced about how qualifications will be awarded.

We should all be reassured and encouraged that the scientific and medical experts have concluded that it is now safe for children to return to school. It is so important to get students back into school before the Easter holidays so that we can continue to build the momentum of the school year and return to some normality after so long away.

With numbers of infections falling and the vaccination programme making good progress and reaching those most vulnerable to Covid-19, we can be hopeful that this stage of the pandemic is coming to an end. We must of course, however, remain vigilant and continue to follow the guidelines that have become so routine across the school this academic year. Thus, social distancing will remain in place, face coverings must be worn indoors where social distancing cannot be maintained (including in classrooms) and students will continue to learn in their bubbles and self-isolate should they be in close contact with someone who tests positive for the virus.

It is important, as ever, that we all remain vigilant to the symptoms of Covid-19 even though the risk to young people is very small. There are things we can all do to help reduce the risk of getting ill with Covid-19:

- wash our hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds;
- use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available;
- wash our hands as soon as we get home;
- cover our mouth and nose with a tissue or our sleeve (not our hands) when we cough or sneeze;
- put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash our hands afterwards.

As you will recall, we now have the additional benefit of being able to test students three times for Covid-19. In doing so, we will be able to identify any students who are positive but asymptomatic and



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who need to self-isolate. We will provide more information about this and how and when students will return to school by early next week at the latest.

Parents who have yet to complete the consent form should do so immediately. The link for the consent form has been texted to all parents and carers. If you would prefer to have the consent form emailed to you, please send an email to enquiries@sheffieldsprings.org with the subject heading 'Request Covid Testing Consent Form'. Following the on-site testing we will be able to offer all students home-test kits and will provide more information about this in due course.

If your child shows any symptoms of Covid-19 (a new, continuous cough and/or a high temperature and/or a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste and smell) please do not send them to school or for their asymptomatic testing but go to the dedicated NHS 111 Covid site, <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19/>, for details of what you need to do.

Over the next two weeks our remote learning programme will continue in full. Each day is vital in your child's education, so it is very important that all students continue to work hard from home and keep up with their lessons and learning.

On Thursday 4th March at 6pm I will be holding a virtual parent's event through Microsoft Teams. I will present in detail our re-opening plans and be available to answer any of your questions.

We look forward to welcoming students back to school and thank you again for everything you have been doing to encourage and support their learning from home.

Your sincerely

Mark Shipman
Head Teacher

Headteacher: Mr M Shipman

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Registered address: United Learning, Worldwide House, Thorpe Wood, Peterborough, PE3 65B

Sheffield Springs Academy
Hurlfield Road, Sheffield, S12 2SF
t 0114 2392631
enquiries@sheffieldsprings.org
www.sheffieldsprings-academy.org