

Open Academy Update 5 March 2021

For parents and students – please do discuss the contents with your child!

Welcome to this week's newsletter.

My introduction this week will be much shorter than last week as we are so busy getting the students tested in preparation for return. The key thing I wish to communicate is the amazing togetherness that I feel from your responses around our return plans and testing.

All staff, except those shielding, are back in today getting ready for the return and ensuring they are tested and ready and we cannot wait to have the students back in.

As you can imagine, testing the students twice 3 days apart for safety as they return is an incredibly complex and demanding process, which we are doing all we can to deliver efficiently. I was delighted to see how well the process worked for years 13 and 11 yesterday and 12 this morning and I am humbled by the fact that so far, every single child that we are expecting in next week has been tested. With consent completion already well over 90% across all other year groups, it feels like a true partnership between you and the academy to help keep things as safe as they can be for our return. So, all I can say on behalf of the whole community is thank you!

We will start the final round of the academy LFD testing next week too, although for these tests the students will already be back in so they will be sent from lessons to have their test and if they are negative will return to lessons once the test is completed.

LFTD Test 3

The schedule for test 3 is as follows (to keep the testing window within 3-5 days of the previous test):

- Thursday, 11 March am – Y11/Y13
- Friday, 12 March am – Y10/Y12
- Monday, 15 March am – Y7
- Tuesday, 16 March am – Y8
- Thursday, 18 March am – Y9

At these third tests, if all goes according to plan, we are expecting to be issuing your child with their 'Home Test Kit' to be used over the coming weeks.

Home Testing

From their third test, students will be allocated a 'Home Test Kit' which contains 7 Lateral Flow device test kits to allow them to self-test every 3-5 days in the run-up to Easter. We are still receiving formal guidance on these kits, so will share further information and guidance about their use as we issue them from next Thursday, so watch this space. However, we are hopeful that this will further reduce the need for in school testing so that we can go back to focussing on learning!

Face Coverings

Those of us who have been in the academy all along know how challenging the mask wearing all day habit can be to get used to. However, we also know that you do indeed get used to it. Please do encourage your child to wear their masks as requested when in the building especially by supplying two or three clean masks to get them through the day. The looser cotton type seem to be the ones most tolerable over the longer use of a whole day. We will have spares in case of genuine need or forgetfulness, but will really appreciate it if you can ensure they have a face covering that works for them at all times.

Please note that face shields are not to be considered as face coverings during this return phase, although I think very few wear shields.

This control measure is probably even more frustrating than the testing, but I am relieved to see that it will be reviewed after Easter.

At the moment, however, we will expect that everyone who can, will wear a face mask!

So, looking forward to the students starting back throughout next week, all jokes aside, I am sure you will miss spending quality time with them. However, we will do all we can to start getting them back into the school habit as quickly as we can.

I will focus more on the examination and qualifications picture next week as more information emerges. For now, I will leave it at “let’s get them back” in my thoughts and prayers!

Reminder from Mr Ward

All students are undertaking low stake assessments at home at present. It is imperative that all students complete all the assessments so that we can plan the very best curriculum for students on their return. Over 60% of students have already completed all available assessments. Well done to those.

Jon Ford
Principal

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1. Year 9 Parents’ Evening – Tuesday, 23 March 2021

We are delighted to announce that the Year 9 Parents evening will be on 23 March – a year after we went into first lockdown. Instructions are attached as to how to book an appointment. This system has been very successful with other year groups. The challenge may be, where some teachers teach every child. Therefore, it worth prioritising your son/daughter’s preferred option subject. You will shortly receive an invite via Parentmail. Any problems, please contact Mrs Roe, Assistant Head of Year.

Mr Ward
Vice Principal

2. Year 7 News

We will keep it brief this week as there has been a lot of information sent out already for the Year 7s returning to school. A quick reminder about Monday and the testing for those who have not consented to their child being tested. Students should attend at the following times:

Monday, 8 March
12:30 -13:30
Mr Bradshaw C7
Mr Walters D7

13:30 - 14:30
Mr Brown I7
Mrs Napthen R7

Students must be in uniform and should wear a face mask.

A further email and text will be issued as a reminder for Thursday times for testing. If you have yet completed the consent form can this please be returned as a matter of urgency.

If your child has borrowed a laptop from school during lockdown please can this be returned on Thursday or Friday.

Shout outs this week:

Mrs McEvoy, German - Madalyn Pryie, Grace Sawiki, Viktoria Kananova, Queenie Rose Newrick and Warren Middleton.

Miss Luter, Food Tech – Ellie Blake for her hydration poster.

Miss Ling, Reading - For high engagement and accelerated reader quizzing success: Rebecca Shapcott, Amy Toms, Rosie Gardner, Luke Jones, Steven Ellis, Jacob Delf.

We are looking forward to welcoming the students back next week. We understand that some families and students feel anxious about the return to school. We would like to reassure you that we will be on hand to support the students to ensure they have a smooth return to school. We will be as flexible as possible to support the students back into school.

Once again, a big thank you to all parents/carers for your support in your child's education from home, we know it hasn't been easy. The students have been amazing and some fantastic work has been produced while working from home.

Mrs Hewitt-Coleman - Head of Year 7
Mrs Lamb – Assistant Head of Year 7

3. Year 8 News

No update.

Miss Lines – Head of Year 8
Ms Moss and Mrs Smith – Assistant Heads of Year 8

4. Year 9 News

We are nearly there! One more full week of online learning at home and then everyone back in school on Monday, 15 March.

We had a Year 9 online scavenger hunt on Monday this week which was good fun. Well done to Hannah Jordan, Dalia Rosca and Millie Woodhouse who placed 1st, 2nd and 3rd. Easter eggs will make their way to you once we are back in school (if Mrs Roe doesn't eat them first).

Just to confirm the arrangements for Year 9 students next week and the week after:

Monday, 8 March – home online learning.

Tuesday 9 March – home online learning.

Wednesday, 10 March – 1st LFTD (Covid test)

12.30 pm – 1.30 pm C9TTH and D9ATH and then go home.

1.30 pm – 2.45 pm I9BLU, R9AED and I9SMC and then go home.

Thursday, 11 March – home online learning.

Friday, 12 March – home online learning.

Monday, 15 March – 2nd LFTD (Covid test)

8.40 am – 10 am – I9BLU, R9AED, I9SMC and then stay in school.

10.30 am – 11.45 am – C9TTH and D9ATH and then stay in school.

- Students should attend in full uniform for both LFTD tests so they do not get into trouble for breaking lockdown restrictions.
- Students should arrive as close to their allocated time for testing as possible.
- They should be wearing masks and be socially distanced from others.
- On arrival, students should go straight to the tennis courts where further guidance will be given.
- Students must not travel in groups and any transport should continue to observe social distancing and mask advice.

Important note regarding devices issued:

Students who have been issued with laptops during lockdown or prior to this are asked to return these to the academy when they arrive for their second LFTD test (15 March).

If your child needs a reminder of their temporary tutor group please ask them to contact Mrs Roe and it will be published in the Year 9 channel too.

Shout outs to:

Finley Davey from Ms Clayton for excellent engagement in his creative writing.

Erin O'Neill from Mr Lambert for amazing science work.

From Miss Ling for high engagement and accelerated reader quizzing success: James Hoye, Dalia Rosca, Kelsey Holman

For accelerated reader quizzing success:

Hannah Jordan, Harry Robinson and Nathan Freeman.

Well done to you all.

Any questions or queries please contact either myself at sean.lambert@open-academy.org.uk or rachel.roe@open-academy.org.uk or on 07810 515978.

Mr Lambert - Head of Year 9

Mrs Roe - Assistant Head of Year 9

5. Year 10 News

No update.

Mrs Clayton – Head of Year 10
Mrs Roberts – Assistant Head of Year 10

6. Year 11 News

Yesterday we had the first round of testing for Year 11. It was so great to see our students looking smart in their uniform and their behaviour whilst being tested was exemplary. Thank you to all for supporting the testing by consenting to your child taking part, we had 100% attendance!

Please encourage your child to look in 'assignments' for online work that will help us assess where your child is currently at in terms of their knowledge and understanding in different subject areas. Results will be confidential and are to help us gauge where students are. We need this information so that we can adequately plan lessons and strategies to support your child in reaching their potential. Whatever work they have or have not done in lockdown, we will build upon this and support them.

HUB sessions will resume after the 15 March, although students may not have formal summer examinations, we will be required to provide evidence of grades awarded by teachers.

Again, thank you for supporting the testing programme and we look forward to welcoming your child back in the academy next week.

Mrs Pearsall – Head of Year 11
Mrs Middleton – Assistant Head of Year 11

7. Sixth Form News

Happy last day of online learning!

I will keep this newsletter relatively short as I know lots of you have emailed me in the past week and we have answered most questions (I hope!).

By now all of you should have managed to get into the academy for your first Lateral Flow Tests, and you will now know that although slightly uncomfortable, this is the best way to keep us all safe once we return back. Please make sure that you all also turn up for your second LFTs on Monday (Year 13) and Tuesday (Year 12). After you have had your second tests next week you will be able to stay in the academy and go to your lessons as per your timetables. For most of you, you will not be starting normal lessons until Wednesday, however please turn up to your normal classes as per your timetable after your second LFT next week and a teacher will be available to talk you through what you will be doing.

In terms of safety, I will just reiterate what I said in my newsletter last week. We ask that all students **wear their mask at all times** around the academy; this includes inside lessons and in the futures area. You can take off your masks when you are sat down and eating, but they should be popped back on afterwards. We realise that this is a big change, but this is all to keep staff and students as safe as possible. As always, we will really encourage all sixth formers to try and keep a safe 2-meter distance between each other at all times. Most of our sixth form students have part time jobs outside of the academy and this means that they are of course going to be exposed to more people, and by keeping a 2-meter distance, we hope to reduce any risks even further.

I know that many of you have a mixture of feelings and that is completely normal. I think everyone, including your teachers, feel a level of anxiety mixed with bubbles of excitement at all being back together again. Please remember that we are all going through this together and speak to us – talking and sharing your feelings will always help!

Have a wonderful weekend everyone 😊

Mrs Molloy
Head of 6th Form

8. Careers

- BBC Bitesize have developed an exciting new careers page aimed at young people. The page includes lots of careers news, real life stories and practical advice on how to find out more about courses, qualifications, getting ready for the world of work and further study. Take a look at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/careers>
- Our Sector of the Month for March is Financial Services. This covers a range of careers including accountancy, insurance, banking and investment management. Reading sixth formers' UCAS Personal Statements I have noticed a growing interest in this sector so I think it worth highlighting. As usual a good place to start is icanbea.org which provides a good basic explanation of what the sector is all about: <https://www.icanbea.org.uk/app/explore/industries/financial-services-29/>
In addition, many of the large organisations in this sector, for example Aviva, provide lots of guidance on their websites around apprenticeships and how to go about applying for them: <https://careers.aviva.co.uk/students-graduates/apprentices-school-leavers/>
- Speakers for Schools continue to provide a programme of talks online. A highlight on Thursday, March 11 is a presentation on Nursing and Midwifery: <https://www.speakersforschools.org/inspiration/vtalks/upcoming-vtalks/>

9. Music Lessons

Drum lessons will be back up and running from the 15 March! Please see the timetable below for lesson times:

15 March

9.45 – Maddison SH
10.15 – Harry M
10.45 – Sam L
11.15 – Jess P
11.45 – Riley D
12.15 – Lucy M
12.45 – Connie N

22 March

9.45 – Connie N
10.15 – Harry M
10.45 – Sam L
11.15 – Lucy M
11.45 – Riley D
12.15 – Jess P
12.45 – Maddison SH

Guitar lesson and singing timetables will be shared in the near future.

Miss Lines
Teacher

10. Canteen



As from Monday 8 March the canteen will be offering:

Baguettes, sandwiches, wraps

Pizza, pasta, jacket potatoes and traybakes

Meal deal - £2.30

11. National Online Safety

National Online Safety have released a brand new app that is free of charge to download. Check out their blurb below which also has a link to the information on how to download:

Children are spending more time than ever online. As adults, we need to do everything we can to keep them safe in the digital world. But with new apps, games and platforms emerging every day, how can you stay in the know?

Say hello to the new National Online Safety mobile application. Created by experts, developed by us.

With all online safety knowledge available at your fingertips, the NOS app empowers parents and teachers to understand and address online safeguarding risks – any time, anywhere.

The world's most comprehensive online safety app, it's packed with insightful courses, explainer videos, webinars and guides on topics that will help you protect the kids you care about when they're online.

<https://info.nationalonlinesafety.com/mobile-app>

Mrs Wicks
Teacher

12. Library News

Preparing for students return

As students return to school over the next couple of weeks it is really important that they have a reading book as part of their equipment. We would strongly encourage all students to reserve a book using our Library Click and Collect service - students log in online and reserve a book which will then be delivered to them once we are back in school. Spending some time to browse the books and reserving a book before our return will mean they are all set to go once we are back in the academy. If they have any previous library books at home from last term, please also collect these together so they can be handed in on their return. Students can contact me on Teams or by email if they need any further support.

Students can access our click and collect website here:

<https://u007886.microlibrarian.net/>

A user guide for using the online library catalogue can be found by [clicking here](#).

Alternatively, if a student is not sure what they would like to read, they [can fill in this form to request a book](#), and we will use their answers to select a book for them.

Students can also access our eBook platform to keep on reading while at home. Available anywhere, and on any device, log in here with their Microsoft email and password: <https://openacademy.eplatform.co/>

World Book Day

We hope you managed to celebrate World Book Day at home yesterday. We have already had some great entries for our World Book Day competition to decorate a toilet roll tube to look like a book character. We are keeping entries open until Wednesday, 10 March so students still have time to complete their entries.

Photos should be sent to Miss Ling via Teams or by email. Students are also entitled to a free £1 book, please see the attached voucher.

Supporting reading at home

Small acts of daily reading are really important to help students make good progress across all of their studies. It can also have a really positive impact on mental health and has been shown to be as effective as exercise or listening to music for relaxation.

As part of our recovery curriculum we are doing a big drive on reading - ensuring that students have a reading book as part of their equipment; encouraging them to read a little bit every day and having one-to-one conversations with students about reading as part of our tutor programme.

We would also like to offer support to parents and carers about how you can support reading at home. With this in mind we will be sharing resources over the coming weeks to help you talk to your child about reading and encourage them to read more. Our first guide focuses on 'book chat' and gives advice about how to start up that conversation. If you have any questions or would like any individual advice please contact me and I will be happy to help.

Staff Read-a-Long

This term's staff read-a-long is of Peter Pan by J M Barrie. Catch up with the full book, or listen to the latest chapters here: <https://bit.ly/3uy22Le>

Miss Ling
Librarian

13. Attendance

I hope you are all keeping well. Please remember you can continue to use the student.absence@open-academy.org.uk email to inform us of any absences including illness, medical appointments etc. of your son/daughter. Many thanks.

Mrs Ganson
Attendance Officer

14. Chaplain's Reflection

https://youtu.be/If_YtMS9xxo

This week I want to talk about how we need to look after ourselves and place value upon our lives. It is difficult for many people who have a "serving others" mentality, to step back and think of themselves. Putting an emphasis on our own self, almost seems alien and selfish when the needs of others seem more important, or more in number around us. I just want to remind you, that taking care of YOU is not a selfish thing.

I read this the other day and it made me really think. "When we don't eat right, sleep right and live right we can't do right". When this is the case we can't function properly ourselves, let alone help others.

The Bible talks quite a bit about this and there is a verse that we can take on board, whether we are of faith or no faith. It says love your neighbour as yourself. We often look at this and concentrate on the care and the love we give to others, where actually it is a two-way street. It talks about loving yourself as well, which is very important.

I want to encourage you to take a step back and operate your life from a place of rest, and also to realise how amazing and valuable you are. Take time for "me" time. We all have our different ways of relaxing, but pull yourself away from the busyness of life. Maybe its physical rest we need, a walk, a time of meditation or even having the courage to say no.

In wrapping this up, when we eat right, sleep right, live right and look after ourselves right, we will do right.

May the Lord bless you and keep you, may the Lord make His face shine upon you and give you His peace.

Mark Pimlott
Chaplain