

# NEWSTEAD WOOD SCHOOL

*"creating opportunities for success"*

Headteacher: Mr Alan Blount MA, BSc, QTS



25<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

## Covid-19 Update: Phased Return to School from 8<sup>th</sup> March

As we begin this new half term, I am very pleased to be writing to you following the Prime Minister's announcement on Monday that all students will start to return to school from Monday 8<sup>th</sup> 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 worked extremely well over the Lockdown period with learning progressing across all Year Groups at a great rate. Our Year 11 and Year 13 students in particular are in very good shape for whatever is ultimately announced about how qualifications will be awarded this summer.

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, 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, 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.



HEALTHY SCHOOLS  
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As you will recall, we now have the additional benefit of being able to test students three times for Covid-19 as they return to school. In doing so, we will be able to identify any students who are positive but asymptomatic and who need to self-isolate before returning to school.

Yesterday the Government announced that we are able to bring students back to school before the 8<sup>th</sup> March to start our asymptomatic testing programme. Key stage 4 and 5 will be invited into school for their first asymptomatic test on either the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> March so that we can commence learning straight away with these year groups from the morning of the 8<sup>th</sup> March. These students will only attend school for their asymptomatic test, and will leave site straight after.

We will be operating our phased return and asymptomatic testing by Year Group in the following order:

| <b>Year Group</b> | <b>Tutor Group</b> | <b>Asymptomatic Test</b>                          | <b>Return to school</b>                |
|-------------------|--------------------|---|--|
| 13                | 1, 2, 3            | Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> March at 9.00 – 10.30am  | Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> March at 8.35am |
|                   | 4, 5, 6            | Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> March at 10.30 – 12.00pm |  |
| 12                | NWS                | Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> March at 9.00 – 10.30am    |  |
|                   | FGPB               | Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> March at 10.30 – 12.00pm   |  |
| 11                | NWS                | Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> March 12.05 – 1.30pm     |  |
|                   | FGP                | Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> March 1.30 – 3.00pm      |  |
| 10                | NWS                | Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> March 12.05 – 1.30pm       |  |
|                   | FGP                | Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> March 1.30 – 3.00pm        |  |
| 9                 | NWS                | Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup> March at 8.35am        |  |
|                   | FGP                | Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup> March at 9.35am        |  |
| 8                 | NWS                | Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup> March at 11.05am       |  |
|                   | FGP                | Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup> March at 12.05am       |  |
| 7                 | NWS                | Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> March at 8.35am         |  |
|                   | FGP                | Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> March at 9.35am         |  |

We have adopted a staggered start to the week to ensure all students are tested, and only once they have received a negative test will lessons commence. Students will continue with online learning until they return to school. Students should maintain social distancing on their way to school and will remain outside of the buildings until they are allowed in for their first asymptomatic test.

Students will receive 2 subsequent asymptomatic tests 3-5 days apart before the 19<sup>th</sup> March in line with Government guidance.

Our full guide to reopening will be available on our website next week. This will detail arrangements for assessments which will take place for Years 7-11 in English and Maths upon our return and the routines and expectations students should follow when at school.

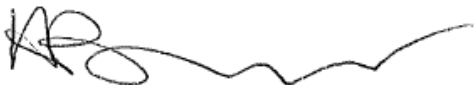
Parents who have yet to complete the consent form should do so immediately. Please click [here](#) to fill in the Microsoft form. If you do not consent to your daughter/son being part of the asymptomatic testing, we still require a return. Following the on-site testing we will be able to offer all students 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 (unless your daughter/son is attending school for their first asymptomatic 1.30 – 3.00pm test). 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.

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.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Alan Blount', with a long, wavy horizontal line extending to the right.

**Alan Blount**  
**Headteacher**