



Executive Headteacher: Mrs S Murcott

24th February 2021

Dear Parent or Carer,

I hope my message finds you well.

Many of you will have seen the Prime Minister's briefing yesterday in which he outlined the government's roadmap to gradually ease lockdown restrictions. We were pleased to hear that from Monday 8 March, all our students will be able to return to the academy for face-to-face teaching.

Continuing to give our children the support they need

We know the toll lockdown has had on the mental and physical wellbeing of young people, so we're very keen to have our students back in academy where we can give them the support they need. We also know that the risks of being out of school are high and increase the longer restrictions are in place, which is why the government has continually prioritised keeping schools fully open.

Furthermore, the overwhelming evidence is that the risk to young people from COVID-19 is low, and despite initial concerns, the new variant is not affecting children and young people disproportionately.

Protecting our children and staff in the academy

We continue to take every precaution here at the academy, including regular and focused cleaning, social distancing and ensuring good hand and respiratory hygiene.

In order to ensure an even safer environment, returning students will be offered three COVID-19 tests in the academy from 8 March, three to five days apart. Once these have been completed, two rapid tests will be provided for use at home each week.

Regular testing will help curb the spread of the virus within our community, and whilst testing is voluntary and always subject to your consent, the taking of these tests is strongly encouraged by Public Health England. All staff will continue to be offered twice weekly tests.

The government also confirmed that face coverings in secondary schools would be extended to all indoor environments, including classrooms, for a limited period until Easter. Face coverings were previously mandatory for students and adults in indoor communal areas.

Finally, children and staff who are confirmed as clinically extremely vulnerable will be asked to stay at home while shielding advice applies nationally.

Helping to create an even safer academy environment

The health and wellbeing of your child is our number one priority and we will do everything in our power to ensure their safety. We believe the additional measures outlined above will go even further in helping to maintain a safer academy environment for all.

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We will be writing to you in the coming days to outline our arrangements for students returning to the academy on 8 March. In the meantime, I take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and ask that you please get in touch with any questions.

Yours sincerely,

Sarah Murcott
Executive Headteacher West Walsall Academies

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Mrs S Murcott
Executive Headteacher

