

23 February 2021

Dear Student, Parent/Carer, Colleague

The college has been closed to nearly all students since 4 January and I was therefore pleased to hear that the government have requested that we now plan to re-open the college to all students. Whilst remote learning has presented some challenges for staff and students, I've been exceptionally pleased with engagement levels throughout this lockdown.

The guidance for schools and colleges has some clear messages for re-opening:

1. Students can only be invited back into college from Monday 8 March.
2. Testing remains voluntary but strongly encouraged. All students should be offered three on-site tests upon their return.
3. Testing and the return of students can be phased during the first week to manage the number of students passing through the test site at any one time.
4. Colleges must make sure that they follow the system of controls to minimise the risk of infection. Systems of control include, for example, year group bubbles, staggered start/end/break times, regular handwashing and enhanced cleaning.

With a college population of over 1,000 students, balancing all of these demands presents some organisational challenges that I, and other senior leaders in the college and Trust, will work out over the coming days.

Whilst I am keen to get students back to face-to-face learning as soon as practically possible, I need to ensure that I keep staff and students safe during this period. Therefore, whilst I am pleased to be able to reopen the college doors for testing from Monday 8 March, it is likely that remote learning will continue during this period whilst the college space and resources are prioritised to offer 1,000 students three on-site tests.

As the plans for re-opening are formulated over the next few days, I will communicate to you again to provide greater clarity on specific return dates.

The college will, of course, continue to remain open for vulnerable students and for the sons/daughters of critical workers, as it has throughout this lockdown.

I once again thank and commend all students and staff on their efforts during remote learning and request your patience for a short while longer. The safety and wellbeing of our community remains my priority as we all begin our return to face-to-face learning.

Yours faithfully



David Holtham
Executive Principal Post 16