

MBA/PPA/C190221
26 February 2021



Walsham Road, Ixworth, IP31 2HS
01359 234050
ixworth@seckfordeducation.org.uk
www.ixworthschool.org.uk

By Parentmail

Dear Parent/Carer

The Prime Minister announced on 22nd February that students would return to school from 8th March. Mr Johnson told the Downing Street news conference that the coming spring and summer would be “seasons of hope, looking and feeling incomparably better for all of us”.

I am excited to see the return of face to face learning for all students; however, it is a significant task to bring all our students back as safely and as quickly as possible. Please take time to read the plan below carefully and discuss with your children.

We feel certain that our School is as safe as it can possibly be and we want to welcome back every single one of our students, including those with certain medical needs. If you have any queries regarding your child’s medical needs and/or your personal circumstances have changed, please contact your child’s form tutor in the first instance.

You will see that we will be moving to a phased return, i.e. different year groups returning on different days. This is so that we can manage mass testing alongside a calm and purposeful return for each and every student. Where parents and carers have children in multiple year groups, we would ask that your children return as per the programme below. In exceptional circumstances where there are siblings in different year groups and it is impossible to bring them back at separate dates/times, please contact the front office. We will have some limited capacity to be able to test students outside of their usual testing bubbles.

For children of key workers and those classed as ‘vulnerable’, can continue to attend as has been the case through lockdown.

Start dates for students – the return to school in March

| | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Monday 8 th March | Years 11 and 10 |
| Tuesday 9 th March | Years 9 and 8 |
| Wednesday 10 th March | Year 7 |

***For Years 7, 8 and 9 on 8th March the day will run virtually. Form Tutors will be running a tutor session between 8.30 and 8.50 am via Google Meet. Work will then be set via Google Classroom.**

Inspiring, enabling and celebrating each and every young person’s personal best

**** For Year 7 on 9th March the day will run virtually. Form Tutors will be running a tutor session between 8.30 and 8.50 am via Google Meet. Work will then be set via Google Classroom.**

Please note that the last day of 'live lessons' will be Thursday 4th March. From Friday 5th March and during the period of the phased return, students will be set work via Google Classroom. Students will be supported in pulling together key themes and pieces of work from the lockdown period ready for the return to school.

Keeping safe is our priority

Face masks

- Face masks will need to be worn in classrooms for lessons as well as when students are indoors and moving around the site. Please ensure students have a suitable face mask each day (unless medically exempt).
- Safe wearing of face masks requires the:
 - **Cleaning of hands before and after touching – including to remove or to put them on.**
 - **Safe storage of face masks in an individual, sealable plastic bag.**

Lateral Flow testing

- In line with the guidance, we will be carrying out three lateral flow tests in-school for each consenting student as we return and we are planning that these tests will be spaced out over the first two weeks. After this date, there will be a system to operate lateral flow tests using home kits and the school can then reduce testing capacity on-site.
- Students with negative test results remain in school as confirmation of their negative result; positive results from lateral flow tests would be shared with parent/ carers immediately by telephone.
- Our SENCO will be producing a more personalised information pack for particular students to support their understanding of Lateral Flow testing. Information is also available via our Covid-19 information page:
<https://www.ixworthschool.org.uk/covid-19/>

Consent

Many thanks to those parents and students who have already consented to testing. The point of the testing system is to identify asymptomatic cases of Covid and help to reduce the transmission of the virus. The more students that have consented to testing, the safer the

school environment will be for everyone. If you haven't consented, please consider this and complete the form below. There is no need to give consent again if have previously done so. <https://www.ixworthschool.org.uk/covid-19/>

To assist with our operations, we would like all consent forms to be completed via the online form by **Wednesday 3rd March** please. After this date any changes to consent will be managed by email to rblackley@seckfordeducation.org.uk

Important

The main symptoms of Covid are:

- **A high temperature**
This means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- **A new, continuous cough**
This means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- **A loss or change to your sense of smell or taste**
This means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.



What are the key reminders for students?

| READY | RESPECTFUL | SAFE |
|--|-------------------|-------------|
| STAY ALERT! | | |
| Follow all school rules and the code of conduct as usual | | |
| Do not enter the Teacher's Zone at the front of the classroom | | |
| Observe physical distancing by staying apart from students in other year groups as much as possible and NEVER mixing between year groups | | |
| Avoid touching hand rails and door handles etc | | |
| Make sure you sanitise your hands as directed | | |
| Wear a face mask | | |
| If you cough or sneeze, do so in to a tissue which you place immediately into a pedal bin | | |
| Avoid touching your face | | |
| Follow instructions at all times to keep everyone safe | | |

The road to recovery

- In preparation for students returning to school, our Lead Practitioners have spent a lot of time thinking about the curriculum.
- Our focus is on building confidence and we have therefore chosen topics that will allow us to move learning forward whilst also providing us with opportunities to check, consolidate and then extend work and understanding from lockdown.

This means in Science, for example, that Year 7 will therefore learn about Sound when they return which is part of our Big Idea that ***Waves Transfer Energy***. Students will learn how sounds are made, how they travel and how they are detected. Students will first re-cap their ideas about Matter and Particles so they can apply new learning to consider how sound travels through different materials. Later in the topic they will also make links back to Tissues and Organs to understand the structure and function of the ear. This unit follows on from the learning about Energy that students did remotely in the first half of this term and the Science Team will be using this as an opportunity to check, consolidate and extend these essential concepts.

- The updated guidance provides us with a route map that will allow us to return to a full programme of extra-curricular activity including music, team sports, drama performances and external teachers and coaches. As you might expect, we are going to build this programme up slowly and gradually and will update parents and carers with our plans.

Year 11 and the awarding of GCSE grades

- The Government has now confirmed that the grading system will be built around teachers' judgements – with schools being allowed to decide on the evidence to be used, such as mock exams, assessments, coursework and essays. There will be no algorithm determining grades.
- We will of course work in line with national guidance to ensure that our students are rewarded fairly for the resilience they have shown and the hard work they have completed during a challenging time.
- Where assessments/ mock style examinations are set, we will always ensure a period of revision beforehand and students will only be assessed on the work they have studied. Standardisation and moderation processes will still be followed.
- The Year 11 Progress Evening of 25th March will still go ahead as planned and we will be writing separately to Year 11 parents and carers to confirm the arrangements.
- GCSE Results Day will take place much earlier this year on 12th August.
- We will write to Year 11 parents and carers with further information next week. The message to our Year 11 students is that they can **LOOK** forward to the return to school and the awarding of their GCSE grades with optimism.

Year 10

As the Year 10 virtual Progress Evening was previously postponed, we have moved this to Thursday 22nd April. We will send out information closer to the time about how to set up your appointments with your child's teachers.

Finally

The new mass testing regime, with the national vaccination programme is an important step in helping to stop the spread of Covid-19. However, all of our other measures remain of paramount importance. Please talk to your son/daughter about the value of regular hand washing, using hand sanitiser, social distancing, eliminating physical contact and wearing a face mask when indoors (unless medically exempt).

If your son/daughter tests positive via the usual NHS testing regime, we will still need you to let us know as a matter of urgency via our portal:

<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/f3cbf08219cb4385ac5ac44fbfd066e1>

I look forward to seeing all of our students return soon. Challenges may persist, however through adherence to our Covid-safe measures and 6Cs I am confident this will be a positive, rewarding and enjoyable term for us all.

Yours sincerely



Pia Parker

Head of School