



THE THOMAS LORD AUDLEY SCHOOL

Part of The Sigma Trust

Headteacher: Simon Essex BSc MA

1st March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Following my correspondence last week I am now in a position to update you on our plans for the wider reopening of Thomas Lord Audley School. As you are aware we are expected to offer our young people a series of three lateral flow tests, each test being 3-5 days apart. As a school we can schedule this testing regime as we see fit. Our approach is based on the operational resources available to us and undoubtedly all schools will be implementing a different approach to meet the testing expectations.

The limiting factor is the requirement for our staff to operate the test site and given the number of tests we are expected to conduct this demands a significant workforce; a workforce that cannot be in both the testing site and in the classroom. We also want our young people to be back in the classroom as quickly and as smoothly as possible, as these routines allow for the school to operate safely. To ensure we meet the testing expectations, support the full integration of students and make sure our school is safe, on the three days that we test students the school will be closed to all students, except those who are vulnerable or children of critical workers.

We will test our students on the following days: **Friday 5 March, Monday 8 March and Friday 12 March**, therefore if you have not given consent for a lateral flow test your child must stay at home on these days. Remote learning will continue to be set, however if your child's teacher is supporting the test site, live lessons will not take place on these days. Staff will communicate this with their groups via the google classroom so you will be made aware in advance.

If you have given consent for your child to receive lateral flow tests I will write to you in a separate correspondence outlining details of the process and expectations. So to be clear, your child will come into school on each day that we test, at an allocated time, and will then leave school again straight after the test.

Arrangements for week commencing 8 March are therefore simple. **Our school will be open to all students from Tuesday 9 to Thursday 11 March (inclusive)** and we will resume our normal operations over these three days; school start times, social time arrangements and lesson timings will be the same as those that we operated in December, prior to closure. Our testing approach minimises disruption to lessons and allows us all to be back in the classroom as quickly and safely as possible.

Face Coverings

You will all be aware of the change in guidance to support the full reopening of schools where face coverings are concerned. Staff and students are now recommended to wear their face coverings inside the classrooms to support our control measures. This guidance is in place until the Easter Holidays where it will be reviewed by the Department for Education. Unless a child is exempt, we expect students to wear masks to help ensure our school can stay open to all students. Once this guidance has been reviewed I will of course update you all.

Home Testing Kits

From week commencing Monday 15 March home testing kits will be available for students. We will distribute these test kits to students to take home. Those who participate in the onsite testing will be familiar with the testing process and for those who have not participated the instructions in the kits are comprehensive to allow for first time use. Once these are ready for distribution I will write to you all with further guidance.

As always I would like to thank you for your continued support during this period of school closure.

Yours sincerely

Mr S Essex
Headteacher