



26<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Dear Parents, Carers and Students

**School Re-Opening Information**

I write to update you on arrangements for returning to school from Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March and we very much look forward to your children returning to St Nicholas Catholic High School once again. I hope that these preliminary details support you in making necessary arrangements for your child’s return. Our full re-opening guidance and updated risk assessments will be made available to you next week.

**Return Dates**

As outlined in my recent letter, there will be a phased return for students during the week commencing 8<sup>th</sup> March to manage the number of students receiving their on-site test at any one time. **All students should return for face to face teaching on the days specified below, irrespective of parental preference for testing, which is detailed below.** Once they have returned to school on their assigned days, they should then continue to attend school every day as normal.

	<b>Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March</b>	<b>Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> March</b>	<b>Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> March</b>	<b>Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> March</b>	<b>Friday 12<sup>th</sup> March</b>
Yrs 13 & 11	<b>Return to school</b>				
Yrs 12 & 10	Remote Learning at home	<b>Return to school</b>			
Yrs 9 & 7	Remote Learning at home	Remote Learning at home	<b>Return to school</b>		
Yr 8	Remote Learning at home	Remote Learning at home	Remote Learning at home	<b>Return to school</b>	

During this phased return, those students not attending site will continue to receive remote learning provision for each of their timetabled lessons every day via Microsoft Teams.

School will be open to students from 8.20am and they should proceed straight to their form bases once they arrive on site. Those students who have chosen to be tested will receive their first on site test during their first day back at school. Lessons will continue as usual during the school day. School buses will be fully operational from Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March.

**The School Day**

On returning to school, the schedule and timings of lessons, breaks, arrivals and departures will be exactly the same as the Advent Term.

**Supporting Student Welfare**

As I stated on our first return to school in September, we know that students will return to school next week with a full spectrum of emotions - they will each bring with them their individual journeys through this most recent ‘lockdown’ with its many highs and lows. We have put in place an extensive ‘transition plan’ to support all students

returning to the routines and rhythms of school life and through our morning Form Time schedule and our Sacred Space activities, we will ensure that reorientation back into school remains an absolute priority.

Additional support for individual students will be signposted at every opportunity from our Pastoral Team, Learning Mentors and Mairie as our Chaplain. If you feel that we can do anything to support your child on their return to school, please do let us know via your child's Form Tutor or Year Leader.

### **Mission Day: Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March**

To support this transition back to school, and in response to our recent student survey, we have designated Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March as our 'Make Your Mark Mission Day' - one of our two Mission Days throughout the year. Following their usual virtual form period at 8.45am, students will be encouraged to engage in four separate Missions which include a choice of nearly 100 activities in four distinct areas that reflect our distinctive nature as a Catholic school - Acts of Kindness, Creative, Physical Activity and Mental Wellbeing. Having completed their 4 missions, students will then be asked to produce one piece of evidence to submit at the end of the day to their Form Tutor using Microsoft Teams. We believe these active, positive, engaging, and non screen based activities will afford students some much needed reflection time as they prepare for returning to school from the 8<sup>th</sup> March. Full details will be shared in a letter to parents and carers next week.

### **On Site Testing**

Rapid testing using Lateral Flow Devices (LFD)s will support the return to face-to-face education by helping to identify people who are infectious but do not have any coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms. Testing is voluntary. We would encourage as many students as possible to participate in the initial onsite testing when returning to school, with 3 tests being taken 3-5 days apart. Full details of testing arrangements are included in a separate, attached letter, from Mrs MacCready with all relevant privacy notices and additional guidance.

**Please complete this online form to indicate whether your child WILL or WILL NOT be participating in the on-site testing arrangements by 12 noon on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March. [Access Form [Here](#)]**

[https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=TQCEKBxgKE67QeEw\\_TROKYdnPCV7JArMUTP91ctZxUMUJZVzc1SU5KUFPDWTNHUjVBQUNVRUc2Wi4u](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=TQCEKBxgKE67QeEw_TROKYdnPCV7JArMUTP91ctZxUMUJZVzc1SU5KUFPDWTNHUjVBQUNVRUc2Wi4u)

The link to the form will also be available from the Covid-19 page on the website.

We understand that some students may feel apprehensive about participating in these arrangements and we have produced supporting materials that you can use to discuss this matter with your child(ren). These will be made available to families next week prior to school re opening.

### **Home Testing**

Following the initial 3 on-site LFD tests at school, students will be supplied with LFD test kits to take away and then self swab and test themselves twice a week at home. Students and families must report their result to NHS Test and Trace as soon as the test is completed either online or by telephone as per the instructions in the home test kit. They must also share their result, whether void, positive or negative, with their school to help with contact tracing.

Full details regarding home testing will be issued with the home testing kits and will include guidance and practical advice for parents, carers and students. There are also links to videos which you may find helpful and reassuring.

### **Face coverings**

The current guidance for schools issued on 22.2.21 states schools must now ensure that face coverings are used in recommended circumstances. These circumstances include moving around the premises, outside of classrooms, such as in corridors and communal areas where social distancing cannot easily be maintained – these mitigations were already in place at St Nicholas during the latter part of the Advent Term.

In addition, current guidance states that schools must now ensure that **face coverings should be worn in classrooms** or during activities unless social distancing can be maintained. This will not apply in situations where wearing a face covering would impact on the ability to take part in exercise or strenuous activity, for example in PE lessons. Face coverings will not need to be worn by pupils when outdoors during break and lunchtimes. The Government has stated that they will review this position during the Easter holidays.

Some individuals are exempt from wearing face coverings. Those students designated exempt from wearing a face covering in the Advent Term will not need to wear a face covering in line with national guidance. Further details on exemption can be found [here](#). Should you wish to discuss exemption for your child, please contact their Year Leader in school via the usual channels of communication.

### **Returning to School**

As I have stated previously, when your child returns to school, they themselves could be carrying the Covid-19 virus, as could any student or adult that they meet. All of our updated procedures and risk assessments have been put in place to reduce the risk of transmission of Covid-19 between members of our community. Everyone has an active part to play in our school reopening plan through maintaining social distancing across the school, wearing their face coverings correctly at the appropriate times, washing and sanitising their hands regularly, and following the guidance attached to this letter– it is advice for everyone to follow. I would ask that you adhere to the following instruction from the Government:

Students, staff and other adults must not come into the school if:

- they have one or more [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) symptoms](#)
- a member of their household (including someone in their [support bubble](#) or [childcare bubble](#) if they have one) has coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms they are required to [quarantine having recently visited countries outside the Common Travel Area](#)
- they have had a positive test

They must immediately cease to attend and not attend for at least 10 days from the day after:

- the start of their symptoms
- the test date if they did not have any symptoms but have had a positive test (whether this was a [Lateral Flow Device \(LFD\) or Polymerase Chain Reaction \(PCR\) test](#))

Finally, as we begin another chapter together next week, please be assured that we will continue to do all we can to support your child’s welfare, wellbeing and academic progress this year. In his address last March, Pope Francis reminded us that *“we have realized that we are in the same boat, all of us fragile and disoriented, but at the same time important and needed, all of us called to row together”*. It has been a year like no other, and the St Nicholas community continues to respond with determination, compassion, optimism and hope for the future. We look forward to seeing all of our students in school again next week.

As always, thank you for all you have done to support your child’s home learning during school closure and thank you for the support you continue to offer the St Nicholas community.

Yours sincerely



**Richard Woods**  
Headteacher

